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# MOTION PICTURE ACTING



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HOW TO PREPARE FOR PHOTOPLAYING  
WHAT QUALIFICATIONS ARE NECESSARY  
HOW TO SECURE AN ENGAGEMENT  
SALARIES PAID TO PHOTOPLAYERS

FRANCES AGNEW

ILLUSTRATED EDITION



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MISS FRANCES AGNEW.  
Author, Actress and Photoplayer.

# MOTION PICTURE ACTING

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WHAT QUALIFICATIONS ARE NECESSARY

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SALARIES PAID TO PHOTOPLAYERS

BY  
FRANCES AGNEW

*ILLUSTRATED EDITION*

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

### To My READERS:

This timely book is tendered to those interested in the profession of photoplaying, not only as a textbook of personal instruction, but also in the nature of a book of facts regarding the opportunities of this work, the qualifications, essential talents and methods of procedure for success as a photoplayer.

The information herein has been gleaned from the writer's personal experience with various film companies and on the dramatic stage—the different engagements affording her an opportunity to draw comparisons—and a careful study and investigation of the subject of motion pictures as an industry, a present and future profession, and a source of amusement and instruction to the whole world.

The writer is humbly grateful for the data given by many of the most famous photplayers whose experience and stellar positions have given them an insight into every phase of this vast industry, and especially for the patient encouragement and kind assistance of the publishers, who alone made this little book a possibility and a reality.

F. A.

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## CONTENTS

PART		PAGE
I.	EARLY BEGINNINGS OF THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY . . . . .	9
II.	THE ART OF PHOToplay ACTING . . . . .	16
III.	QUALIFICATIONS . . . . .	24
	Talent . . . . .	24
	Health . . . . .	25
	Mental Ability . . . . .	27
	Personal Appearance . . . . .	29
	Personality . . . . .	31
	Age . . . . .	32
	Patience, Pluck and Perseverance Plus Ambition . . . . .	33
IV.	TRAINING . . . . .	34
	Physical Culture . . . . .	34
	Breathing . . . . .	38
	Facial Expression and Pantomime Practice . . . . .	40
	Observation . . . . .	43
V.	HOW A MOTION PICTURE ENGAGEMENT IS OBTAINED . . . . .	44
	Theatrical Agencies . . . . .	45
	Jobbing . . . . .	53
	Film Companies . . . . .	56
	Types . . . . .	59
VI.	SALARIES OF MOTION PICTURE PLAYERS . . . . .	62
VII.	DO'S AND DON'TS TO THE PROSPECTIVE PHOTPLAYER . . . . .	65
VIII.	HEIGHTS OF SUCCESS AS A PHOToplayer . . . . .	67
IX.	PRODUCING A PHOToplay . . . . .	71
	The Motion Picture Studio . . . . .	71
	The Stage—foreground and side lines . . . . .	72
	Costumes . . . . .	76
	Make-up . . . . .	77

## CONTENTS

<b>PART</b>		<b>PAGE</b>
<b>X. STATEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PHOTOPLAYERS . . .</b>		<b>83</b>
	Miss Gwendoline Pates (Pathé Frères) . . . .	83
	Mr. Carlyle Blackwell (Kalem) . . . . .	84
	Miss Miriam Nesbitt (Edison) . . . . .	85
	Miss Flora Finch (Vitagraph) . . . . .	87
	Miss Mae Hotely (Lubin) . . . . .	88
	Miss Muriel Ostriche (Reliance) . . . . .	90
	Miss Alice Joyce (Kalem) . . . . .	93
	<b>Mr. John Bunny (Vitagraph) . . . . .</b>	<b>95</b>

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Miss Frances Agnew, the Author . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Miss Alice Joyce . . . . .	14
Miss Joyce and Miss Agnew in a Kalem Photoplay . . . . .	18
Mr. John Bunny . . . . .	22
Miss Mae Hotely . . . . .	26
Miss Mae Hotely in a Lubin Photoplay . . . . .	30
Miss Agnew, as Jessica, in "The Merchant of Venice" . . . . .	34
Miss Agnew as an Indian Maid in a Crystal Photoplay . . . . .	38
Miss Gwendoline Pates . . . . .	42
Miss Pates in a Pathé Frères Photoplay . . . . .	46
Miss Pates in a Pathé Frères Photoplay . . . . .	50
Miss Pates in a Pathé Frères Photoplay . . . . .	54
Miss Agnew, as Lucius, in "Julius Caesar" . . . . .	58
Miss Miriam Nesbitt . . . . .	62
Miss Miriam Nesbitt in an Edison Photoplay . . . . .	66
Miss Muriel Ostriche . . . . .	70
Mr. Carlyle Blackwell . . . . .	74
Miss Mae Hotely in a Lubin Photoplay . . . . .	78
Miss Flora Finch . . . . .	82
Miss Finch in a Vitagraph Photoplay . . . . .	86
Miss Finch and Mr. John Bunny in a Vitagraph Photoplay . . . . .	90
Miss Mae Hotely as an Irishwoman . . . . .	94
Mr. John Bunny as a Jolly Tar . . . . .	98



# MOVING PICTURE ACTING

## PART I

### EARLY BEGINNINGS OF THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

**I**F YOUR grandmother, when a little girl, had been told that perhaps she "would live to see the day" when there would be *real moving pictures*, she would have been all excitement and like most women—and men, too, to be fair to all—she would have been filled with that often-tragic possession known as sheer curiosity. Naturally, her first question would have been "What are moving pictures?" She no doubt had a vague idea of moving or animated pictures. Perhaps, like children of to-day, she had made her own "movies" by holding an ordinary picture close to the eyes, staring at it a moment in a "cross-eyed" fashion, thus producing the illusion of animation. Staring at a picket fence, striped materials, etc., without blinking the eyes, soon deludes one into believing that the rails, stripes or perpendicular lines are swaying from

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

side to side, while in reality it is only an illusion of the optical organs. Perhaps, also, "grandmother's big brother" had a magic lantern, a toy which like the camera or larger projecting lantern has been likewise improved, so that children of to-day are also the delighted possessors of toy motion picture machines.

She knew all this, and had no doubt seen stereopticon slides. How could there be anything greater? And yet the world was destined to know and see something even greater in this line, and if the vast strides made by men of photographic genius can be taken as a criterion for the future, the half has not yet been accomplished.

The earliest beginnings of what might be called moving pictures, though in the crudest form, of course, were about 1872, we are told—just a few years after that great civil catastrophe which impeded the progress of discovery and invention in our country and also in foreign lands, since the eyes of the Old World were centered on the efforts of every true American to save his nation according to his own convictions of how that should be done. Although it is known that prior to this date, even before the war, similar experiments were made by various inventors, yet we have little record of the results of these efforts, and nothing noteworthy was accomplished.

About this time (1872), an enterprising Englishman, a resident of America, however, conceived the

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

idea of making motion pictures by the use of successive snap shots. It was his belief that the results could be accomplished by placing several cameras in a row and as the object to be photographed passed, each camera took a "snap." This method was used to photograph the actions of animals in motion, and its greatest success was at the race track. Here, strings attached to each camera were stretched across the track at such a height as to make it impossible for the horse to pass without breaking the string. In so doing the horse really took a snap shot of his action at that moment. These "snaps," after development, were pieced together and shown on the screen in much the same way that stereopticon slides are exhibited. While he truly accomplished something in the way of animated pictures, and at least set the pace for others to follow, giving the impetus strongly responsible for present day results in animated photography, it is quite apparent that his method could be put to very limited use. In fact, the only experiments he made were the running and walking actions and athletic feats of men and animals as they passed before the row of cameras. It is also obvious that the films thus produced—most uninteresting and boring in comparison with those now shown—must have depicted very disconnected and jerky movements when thrown on the screen. When we compare this method with that in use to-day and try to consider how it would have been possible for its

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

originator to make pictures of such length as are now shown, we get a clear idea of its impracticability and also a hazy conception of the enormous expense it would involve. Imagine using a separate camera to photograph every action in a picture today! It would be limited, of course, to progressive actions across the screen, but even so, to merely show some of the racing scenes, etc., which it is our privilege to enjoy, would have necessitated the use of hundreds, nay, thousands of cameras. What an undertaking it would have been!

However, every little bit accomplished in any work brings the dreams of ingenious minds closer to the goal of perfection, and while these experiments revealed no very profitable results at that time, the stimulus which this one man's efforts gave to others was wonderful. Men all over the world immediately set to work for one single accomplishment—perfection in motion picture photography. Each sought to outdo the efforts of others; each one, no doubt, had dreams of giving the world *the* invention which should mark perfection in animated pictures. Perhaps the greatest of these early efforts was the invention of the "Wizard of Electricity," Thomas A. Edison. This one of his many wonderful inventions, exhibited to the world in 1893, was known as the "Kinetoscope"—not in its present state of perfection, but more in the nature of a grown-up toy. It was operated by dropping a coin into the slot, and when thus "fed" it gave

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

to the spectator whose eye was placed to the peephole a momentary glimpse of what appeared to him then to be not only marvelous but almost impossible. The automatic actions of the photographs in the machine made the figures thereon seem almost alive. Many doubters refused to believe and declared themselves duped. Though it was impossible that human hands could be working the machine, they still discredited its wonders. Others could only rub their eyes in astonishment and admiration.

Mr. Edison, however, seemed to have little faith in his device except as a coin-eating toy, and neglected to patent his invention in Great Britain. Thus, visitors to America, with a hazy idea of its far-reaching possibilities, sought to have the machine copied in England. There, one Robert A. Paul, to whom they confided their plans, after investigation learned of Mr. Edison's neglect and thus found it easy to control the machine in that country. He planned to extend its wonders by perfecting, from the foundation thus laid by Edison, a machine which would throw these animated pictures on the screen. His efforts in this direction met with ultimate success and an amusing incident is told of his first remarkable accomplishment. It is said that in the wee sma' hours, one morning in 1895, he and his associates were rewarded with success by seeing the results of their efforts in the form of the first perfect motion pictures that had been thrown on the screen. Incidentally, this pic-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

ture was less than fifty feet in length; to-day few are made containing less than five hundred or a thousand feet. But it was such a remarkable achievement and Robert A. Paul had worked so hard for this accomplishment that he and his associates could not refrain from expressing their appreciation of their own work to such an extent that the neighborhood of their little studio was much disturbed in its restful morning slumbers. So great was the exultation that the blue-coated guardians of peace (or perhaps they did not wear this regalia at that time) were summoned to investigate. When they, too, were allowed to view the remarkable exhibition of real moving pictures, they undoubtedly forgot the complaints of the awakened slumberers, and themselves joined in the shouts of delight, leaving the disturbed citizens in the neighborhood to give way to their wrath by lengthy and not too carefully worded discourses against the prowlers of the night who denied the laborer his just deserts as an occasional inhabitant of dreamland!

However, after this climax of success Robert A. Paul succeeded in producing several other pictures, truly remarkable at this stage of the art, and an English manager, ever on the alert for a novelty which would attract the public and in turn rain gold into his private coffers, negotiated with him for the right to use the machine and pictures in his theater. Though dubious as to the outcome of the device



MISS ALICE JOYCE, THE FAMOUS LEADING LADY OF THE KALEM CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

when "tried out" on a critical public, Paul finally consented to share in the venture. Needless to say, enormous success was the result. Thus began the first of the apparently infinite chain of motion picture theaters. To-day Greater New York City alone contains more than six hundred of these places of amusement—some most elaborate, others mere "holes in the wall" with a screen at one end, an operating box at the other, and spectators' benches between. This number is being increased daily, while throughout the whole world, even in the smallest cities and towns, moving picture theaters are being opened constantly and a great many of the large legitimate houses have been turned over to this form of amusement, thus proving its ever-growing popularity.

During these years others in different countries—France, Germany and our own United States particularly—were making similar experiments, with the result that many different devices were put on the market. However, the invention of Thomas A. Edison, the genius, while greatly improved, not only by himself but by many other remarkable inventors, may be said to have formed the basis of all later machines. The various motion picture devices which flash amusement and instruction for the masses to-day are but improvements on and additions to the wonderful apparatus which startled the whole world during the years 1893-1897.

## PART II

### THE ART OF PHOToplay ACTING

Utterly apart from and at the same time vitally related to the subject of moving pictures, their growth and future possibilities from a scientific standpoint, is the art of photoplay acting. This profession, too, may be said to be in its infancy. In the beginning only the lesser players could be induced to enter such work. It was far beneath the dignity of an artist! To give them the benefit of the doubt, the salaries at that time were very small, and this may have influenced the better class of actors against the thoughts of becoming motion picture artists. Nevertheless, those who were led into the work were condemned by regular theatrical managers who refused to consider them for parts on the stage after such experience. These moguls denounced the work as tending to make mechanical figures rather than natural actors; they claimed that pantomime without the effect of voice work made the player like a tree, all limbs, to put it frankly, rather than an artist in full control of every muscle and mentality necessary for the production of a real actor. As a result of this attitude toward

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

the work, many of the "movie" players were recruited from the amateur ranks even in those days, and it is estimated that a large percentage of the screen stars of this age had no other experience, but were the most timid of amateurs when they began to pose for the pictures.

As pictures gained in popularity and larger and more elaborate theaters were built in which to entertain the masses with this form of amusement and instruction, the film companies naturally derived a greater profit from the fact that the added number of theaters necessitated an additional number of copies of each picture. This steady growth naturally spurred the makers to better productions; they sought to place before the public pictures of the highest standard then known. By judicious advertising and just remuneration they secured the best of outside ideas and plots for the foundation of their pictures, thus beginning another interesting and lucrative profession in connection with this work—that of scenario writing. These plots were for productions requiring larger casts of players than they had hitherto used, and the makers, recognizing the fact that the better the players, the better the acting, and the more readily could they express almost all the emotions and ideas that can be conveyed even in stage work with the vital assistance of the voice, offered splendid financial inducements to both talented amateurs and capable professionals. As a result, the artists in the larger theaters, some

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

of them without engagements, others with shaky contracts, used their common sense and decided that "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," a "sure thing" at a good salary would more than overbalance the thought that one's standard would be lowered in becoming a "movie" player. Ambitious amateurs, too, plunged into the work with zeal and enthusiasm—the remuneration for one and all being a certain amount for each day's work. This was similar to what is known as "jobbing"—that is, working only when needed and being paid for the time in service. After a while, however, the companies began to note and gather data as to the impressions made on the spectators by the personality and work of different players. Their names were not given to the public in any way, but the audiences learned to know their faces and to follow the work of their favorites in the different pictures in which they appeared.

Naturally, this interest and admiration for certain players produced a corresponding admiration and desire to see the photoplays made by their management, and, recognizing this as a good means of advertising, the manufacturers placed these special players on a guaranteed salary basis—the number thus engaged forming the regular "stock" organization whose services are at the exclusive command of one company.

The universal popularity and fame gained by photoplayers, if gifted for the work and endowed

TOM MOORE ALICE JOYCE  
STEPHEN PURDEE GEO. MOSS  
MRS. LAWRENCE  
FRANCES AGNEW  
IN A SCENE FROM THE KALEM PHOToplay, "WHEN FATE DECREES."





## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

with an appealing personality, is amazing. Even some of the lesser screen lights are to-day better known throughout the country than a number of the most finished stage stars. They have their admirers in every part of the globe. They assist in making many pictures in the studio or surrounding country, and in a short time these pictures have traveled far and wide and entertained the masses.

"One man in his time plays many parts," is an old saying, but a photoplayer "goes this one better." He plays many parts in many places on the self-same night. He cannot be in more than one place at a time personally, yet his acting is enjoyed by thousands in many different localities at the same moment. All this has been made possible by the motion picture machine, which is truly one of the wonders of the world! The "movie" actor does not know his audience, but his audience knows him, and, with a view to gratifying the desire on the part of spectators to know their favorites better (naturally prompted by the personal profit in sight, too), most of the current magazines recognized the wisdom of a department for motion pictures, photoplayers, etc., while many other newer magazines are published solely in their interest, with question columns which enable a closer friendship, so to speak, between the delighted spectator and his screen favorite.

Besides this, it is the privilege of many of the screen stars to go and see their audiences personally

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

—not only “from the front” where they can sit as one of them, seeing but unseen, and gathering a deal of information as to the varied opinions of their acting while it is being shown on the screen—but also from the stage, as oftentimes, especially in the last year, a “movie” favorite is invited to come in person to a theater in the vicinity in which they may be located, to be seen “in the flesh,” and speak a word to the audience regarding the motion pictures, also giving laughable accounts of interesting happenings while working in the pictures.

To see a well-known player taking a prominent part in a first-run film and then see and hear the player personally is a treat to the fortunate audiences, and naturally, when it is advertised that Mr. or Miss Blank of the Blank Film Company will appear on the evening of such-and-such a date, the box office receipts show the spectators’ appreciation of the pleasure accorded by the manager, thus making it a profitable deal for him. Though a very few players have been known to give their services in such cases for the glory and free advertising it brought, yet the majority of them are independent of this course and only make such appearances for a stipulated remuneration—these appearances subject to the consent of the management of the film company by whom they are employed. The amount received ranges from \$10.00, \$15.00 and \$25.00 upward for each appearance, according to the size

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

of the theater (an amount not to be scorned when it is remembered that this is clear profit "on the side"). Some of the more prominent players have added as much as \$100.00 to their regular weekly salary as the result of such personal appearances in the motion picture theaters.

There are also opportunities when the management of the company allows a player to accept a vaudeville offer made by some booking agent or theater manager who wishes to feature the motion picture player on a special vaudeville bill. These appearances are made in all the larger cities at various times and net the "movie" star a very large salary, since his fame in the pictures acts as a big advertisement and drawing card in the theater for which he is billed. Thus the deal is a mutual success. Mr. John Bunny, for instance, draws a salary of \$1,000.00 a week for occasional weekly engagements in vaudeville. Others of less fame and entertaining ability receive in proportion according to the "goods they have to offer" in the way of a novel vaudeville act and their power as a box office magnet.

Such personal appearances break the monotony of regular picture work and give the photoplayer that which is lacking in the studio—applause! It is not always conceit which incites players to long for this indication of public appreciation; more often it is a yearning for encouragement and a desire to know that his efforts to "make good" have

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

not been in vain. "Applause is the spur of noble minds, the end and aim of weak ones."

It is not every city or town, of course, that has the privilege of seeing and hearing the players personally in this way. In places where a stock company is located to take pictures it is not so difficult for the theater manager to make such arrangements, but other cities or towns not among the list possessing the desired scenery for special photoplays cannot enjoy this privilege except in cases where a player goes on a tour to lecture on the subject of motion pictures, or accepts special vaudeville offers, or secures leave of absence from the film company for the purpose of making an extended vaudeville tour throughout the country.

It is amusing to watch the efforts of a photoplayer to extricate himself from the throng of admirers who storm the theater and wait outside for Mr. or Miss Blank, and when at last in sight, even a smile or friendly word is highly cherished because it came from that player. This is only another of the heights of popularity all over the country which this work affords.

As the general public has watched the growth and in a measure become familiar with the origin and expansion of the profession of photoplaying for both men and women, "stage-struck" humanity the world over has in many cases changed its adoration from the legitimate theaters to the motion picture houses. Others who have little interest



MR. JOHN BUNNY, THE GREAT STAR OF THE GREAT VITAGRAPH CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

in regular dramas, comedies, etc., as shown in the legitimate theaters or "opery house," have become intensely interested in motion picture work. Thus "the lure of the screen," we may call it, rather than the lure of the footlights, is becoming stronger than many can resist, and again and again do we hear the question "How can I get a chance?" or, in stage parlance, "break in."

By way of explanation, in passing it is well to note that the word "legitimate" in theatrical parlance is the term used to denote the ordinary speaking stage or dramatic and musical branch of the profession, as contrasted with the variety or vaudeville stage, or the latest branch—motion picture acting. Thus we say of a dramatic or musical actor on the speaking stage, "He's in the 'legit,'" which is a professional slang phrase meaning that he is on the legitimate stage; "He's doing the two-a-day" means that he is in vaudeville, and "He's working in the movies" means that he is posing or playing in motion pictures.

## PART III

### QUALIFICATIONS

At this point the "stage-struck" one, with due personal justice, should ask himself, "Am I eligible, or gifted with the qualifications essential to success as a photoplayer?"

#### I. TALENT

First and foremost, perhaps, are a natural talent and love for acting and the yearning desire to "make believe you're somebody else," as children say.

It is rare indeed to find an instance in which a normal individual has not at some time in his life experienced what is known as the "stage-struck" fever. It usually attacks young manhood or womanhood between the ages of 15 and 20, though some have had the malady even earlier, others later. A deep-rooted case results in real sane ambition, which nothing can daunt. In a mild form the "fever" soon breaks and other interests in life take its place. No case is to be regarded seriously by those who would check it until it has had control of the "patient" for a year or two. During this time, if really in

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

earnest, he or she will have prepared or planned a fortification against every obstacle and made a firm resolution to succeed, in spite of the drawbacks of financial disability, parental objection or lack of opportunity, even though it might mean longer years of work and waiting. This is the test of true ambition, and when it so asserts itself those interested can do no better than to quell their objections, if any, and substitute helpful encouragement.

To return to the subject of talent, however: this is a most necessary qualification, of course, but it pales into insignificance in comparison with some of the other necessary attributes. Do not understand that one can succeed without talent to a degree, but it has been proven in many cases that even remarkable histrionic ability is not in itself adequate. Talent, with the added force and wise direction of other qualifications, spurred on by patient ambition, cannot fail to win success.

## II. HEALTH

Even marked talent can accomplish little without good health, which is an important attribute to success in any undertaking. A weak body is a drawback to any ambition, and especially is it a bar to one who would work for the amusement of the world. In the studio and outdoors the photoplayer is subject to various changes of weather conditions,

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

long hours of steady work and confinement, and discomforts both in traveling and in stationary engagements, which a weakling cannot combat. He may brave the hardships of such a career for a while, but unless strong, physically, a nervous breakdown is inevitable. The actor, more than any other, perhaps, should be almost immune to illness. In legitimate work he may have an understudy to take his place. However, every part is not understudied, especially the stellar rôles, and if the actor in the part cannot go on it often necessitates canceling the performance, causing financial loss to each and every member of the company as well as to the management. In the studio it is the same. Perhaps a player is working in a picture which has been continued from the day before. He is expected at the studio at a certain hour and everything is in readiness for work. Should illness prevent his reporting, the director cannot even resort to the understudy system. If the picture had not been started, he could put another player in the part, but it is impossible, under ordinary circumstances, to use two players for the same part in one picture. The director can do nothing but postpone the picture until the actor's recovery, or re-take the previous scenes with another in the rôle.

No one can do better than to strengthen himself, physically, by a regular system of freehand or gymnastic exercises. This subject, however, is discussed more fully under the head of training. First of



MISS MAE HOTELY, OF THE LUBIN CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

all, attain good health. Examine yourself carefully in this particular. Are you normal in every way? lips red, eyes clear, flesh firm, appetite good, nerves steady? If not, why not? Your mode of living affects your health. Many can trace bad health to certain habits or extravagant methods of living which they insist on retaining, though the advice of their physician is but a repetition of personal knowledge which they could follow themselves if they but had the courage and self-control.

### III. MENTAL ABILITY

It has often been said, maliciously, that actors neither need nor possess brains, but are as so much human clay in the hands of the directors. This is a gross insult to the entire profession of acting, no matter in what branch. The mental power of a large percentage of the world's Thespians is not only far above the average, but in many cases remarkable. Genius has been employed in the creation of some of the wonderful characters which have been unfolded to us both on the stage and on the screen. Originality and depth in a characterization are the products of mental force as well as feeling, and no true artist is lacking in that capacity. He who succeeds must be normal mentally. Not all players are marvels of intellect, 'tis true, but in this work, as in all lines of endeavor,

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

talent amounts to little unless its "side partner" is good common-sense. A wonderful education is not necessary. In some cases it is an impossibility—in others a waste of money. No circumstances, however, make it necessary for any one to be ignorant. "Accuse not nature, she has done her part: do thou but thine," is sound advice which should be followed. You may recall the announcement some time ago of President Eliot of Harvard University, in which he stated that he had selected the contents of an eight-foot book shelf which contained a good and sufficient education any one could personally give to himself if he so desired. This is but another way of saying that systematic home study and sensible reading give in themselves a broad education and enable one to readily think and converse on interesting topics of the day. This is particularly helpful in theatrical work. In the studio one meets a great many different people, and unless he is intellectually on a plane at least with these people he will find himself somewhat alone and isolated.

Then, too, a fair education, coupled with good common sense, THE essential point, carries with it a certain amount of business ability which is a coveted asset and a most beneficial possession in the field of art and literature. It is a deplorable fact, but nevertheless true, that few players have a natural or trained commercial intelligence. They spend their earnings freely, often make ill-advised investments and forget to lay by for the "rainy"

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

season—between engagements. The photoplayer is less apt to experience this “rainy” season, since his work goes on all the year—52 weeks—but, until he has made a name and created a demand for his services, even he is not exempt from such a time when that most independent of possessions—a bank account, however small its beginning—serves as a “mighty good comforter.” Therefore, beware! Covet not wealth, but strive for independence!

### IV. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

A very important detail, of course, is personal appearance. This is more essential to the photoplayer than to the legitimate actor, since the former cannot resort to the same artifices of make-up which assist and solve many problems for his brother behind the footlights. The camera is most accurate, and to become a good successful photoplayer one must possess at least ordinary regular features and normal physical development. This applies to a straight player, not including the eccentric unusual types which find opportunity in special pictures written expressly for such figures.

Generally speaking, large facial features make a much better impression both in stage and screen work. This does not mean abnormally large, but rather more than mere doll features. Small features can be made to appear larger, but those

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

on whom Nature has bestowed this asset will find it an advantage. It is quite apparent that large features have more strength or carrying power. Their expressions can be clearly read even in the farthest corner of any room where the changing moods of small doll-like features would hardly be discernible. Large dark expressive eyes are a special asset. In fact, the "windows of the soul" are the strongest medium of expression within the control of the photoplayer.

Both blondes and brunettes, fair and dark complexions, are engaged in picture playing, but the latter are given the preference since it has been found through experience that except in rare cases the brunette photographs better for the screen. A normally healthy person possesses the physical development of his age, height, etc. No more is required, though it is obvious that physical exercise would enhance and strengthen this development.

Closely akin to the subject of personal appearance in general is the question of beauty, which may well be called a coveted possession, but a dangerous weapon in the hands of those endowed with no other qualities. Attractive features are an asset, of course, but do not be obsessed with the idea that beauty is essential or necessary. There are few young men who cannot be said to present a good appearance and few young women who are not pretty to a degree, but on the other hand there are very, very few who can boast of remarkable



MISS MAE HOTELY IN A SCENE FROM A PHOTOPLAY OF THE LUBIN CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

natural beauty. If so, there would be little need for the manifold "Beauty Secrets" articles which appear in the columns of every daily newspaper. Cosmetics would be little in demand and there would be no opportunity for the richly paid beauty specialist.

Be neat and magnetic—attractive, not gaudy—in your dress and demeanor, developing the other gifts bestowed by nature, and you will have little cause to mourn over your lack of exterior beauty or to bewail the fate that did not make you one of the chosen "very, very few."

## V. PERSONALITY

This qualification is the embodiment of talent, health, mental and commercial ability and personal appearance. It is an almost indefinable "something" which lures or repels. When it attracts it might be called "charm" and in this meaning it is a wonderful asset in stageland or screenland. Without ambition and average mentality one hasn't the bubbling enthusiasm of an alluring personality. It is personality which wins popularity. Recall the names of your "screen" favorites. Was it some wonderful bit of acting which coerced your admiration? No! Wasn't it some manly traits or actions peculiar to himself, or the dainty ways or alluring smile which only she could possess? That is per-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

sonality—magnetism, a quality which every player seeks to develop to the utmost.

### VI. AGE

No fixed rule could be made governing the age of the beginner in screenland. The profession to-day includes those of all ages—from the cradle to 60 or more. This depends almost entirely upon the individual. Every type and age of humanity is at some time or other pictured in the photoplays—babies, little children, youth, young manhood or young womanhood, middle age, and life in elderly years. So one must be guided by circumstances. Under favorable conditions, financially or otherwise, from 15 to 25 is the age when ambition is at its height, and all attention is centered on the accomplishment of one interest, one ideal. However, circumstances alter situations, and many worthy ambitions have been checked and delayed by counter-acting influences, but finally the opportunity has come, found a welcome hand and led to success. Many of the better photplayers, especially those portraying special character parts, such as old maids and bachelors, and elderly types of different moods, started their careers after the age of 30, many of them having had no experience whatever.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

### VII. PATIENCE, PLUCK AND PERSEVERANCE, PLUS AMBITION

Extra good doses of the three P's—patience, pluck and perseverance—must be added to these qualifications, and topping it all one must possess a strong determined ambition which knows no discouragements. In anything you undertake—whether it be to become a successful photoplayer or to enter any other profession—let the star of hope be an instigator to the "keep on a-tryin'" habit, and when dark clouds of disappointment interpose 'twixt you and that star, when ambition seems in vain and you think "Oh, what's the use," tighten the screw to your courage, apply a little physical "punch" to your efforts and start again. Cling to hope! When it is lost your ambition begins to melt and failure is the inevitable result.

## PART IV

### TRAINING

Having sounded the subject of qualifications and convinced yourself that you will make a good soldier, the next step is to enter training. There are some methods of personal study and practice which assist in overcoming the disadvantages and embarrassment usually experienced by an amateur when seeking to lay the foundation for a stage career. One of the most important among these is:

#### I. PHYSICAL CULTURE

This subject is most important in all work, especially in the field of histrionic art. It not only aids in attaining physical strength and good health, but it results in grace of movement and motion and unconscious and correct attitudes of the body. If you are continually conscious of your hands, your arms, your feet, they will always be "in your way," so to speak. You will be awkward in posing and lacking in that grace and refinement of movement which are characteristic of the finished artist. To acquire this grace and ease in a general way de-



MISS FRANCES AGNEW, AS JESSICA, SHYLOCK'S DAUGHTER, IN SHAKE-



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

pends entirely upon yourself. You may attend physical culture classes, enter gymnasiums, dance, fence or indulge in various outdoor sports such as tennis, golf, rowing, etc., but unless followed diligently your efforts are of little avail. Every one, no doubt, has taken free-hand exercises as a part of the curriculum of school work, but few regard these simple little exercises of any importance. Too much cannot be said of the value of such a system of physical training. Exercises which involve stretching and bending the arms and legs, relaxing the wrist, swaying the body and bending the trunk are all of infinite benefit in strengthening and developing a weak physique, and of just as vital importance in acquiring graceful movements and positions.

*Practice suggestions:* Such simple exercises as turning the head from side to side and bending it forward and backward; rotating the shoulders, throwing them backward and forward, tend to develop the chest and strengthen the lungs. Swinging and raising the arms, bending at the elbows, thrusting forward, rolling the hand at the wrist and shaking the fingers vigorously, cannot fail to give to these muscles the freedom and relaxation which are so necessary in making expressive gestures. Bending left, right, forward and backward at the waist, swaying the body in all directions (allowing the arms free will in these exercises) relaxes the whole body, strengthens the back and induces cor-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

rect standing and sitting postures. Raising the leg forward, bent at the knee, and thrusting backward (straightening the leg on this movement and holding the body firmly erect) is one of the simplest and at the same time most helpful exercises to be practiced. It strengthens and gives control over the muscles of the lower limbs and aids in acquiring grace in walking the stage or in private life.

From these general exercises is evolved an infinite number of special exercises, all tending to accomplish the same results. It is not so much the exercise itself, however, as the force and diligence with which it is taken—not once, but many times every day. With a feeling that such simple exercise amounts to nothing and is but a waste of time, ambition soon loses itself and grows lax with this part of its development. Hence it is strongly urged that the prospective photoplayer start his system of training for the work with the determination to give himself a careful physical education, even if it becomes necessary to make his daily practice of at least half an hour as strong a habit as his daily meals. Early morning, just after rising, is the best time for this practice. For the majority, however, this is inconvenient; but surely some time in the day will furnish a half hour's leisure. Even if you attend a gymnasium with all its benefits, do not neglect these free-hand practice exercises. Not only is this the first step in a thorough training for the

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

stage, but its results are most essential for success in every walk of life.

Dancing and fencing do much to acquire grace and ease of manner, and especially is a knowledge of the former of vital importance in histrionic work. However, they are in themselves but other forms of physical training, and until the opportunity for such study is placed well within one's reach the time should be utilized in free-hand practice which involves no expense whatever. Many of the best known artists on the screen to-day know nothing of fencing—in fact, never handled a sword, unless it may have been in the portrayal of some rôle requiring the use of this property—and also can do naught but social dancing. Yet they are not lacking in that essential to success—a graceful stage presence.

The result of this physical practice, if followed systematically, is oftentimes little short of magical. Awkward mannerisms are enveloped in graceful expressive actions through which is discerned what has no doubt been a dormant personality. Physical self-control paves the way for the assertion of this personality. Mentality responds, and the two forces express the emotions and feelings of a given situation. This is the sum total of photoplaying.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

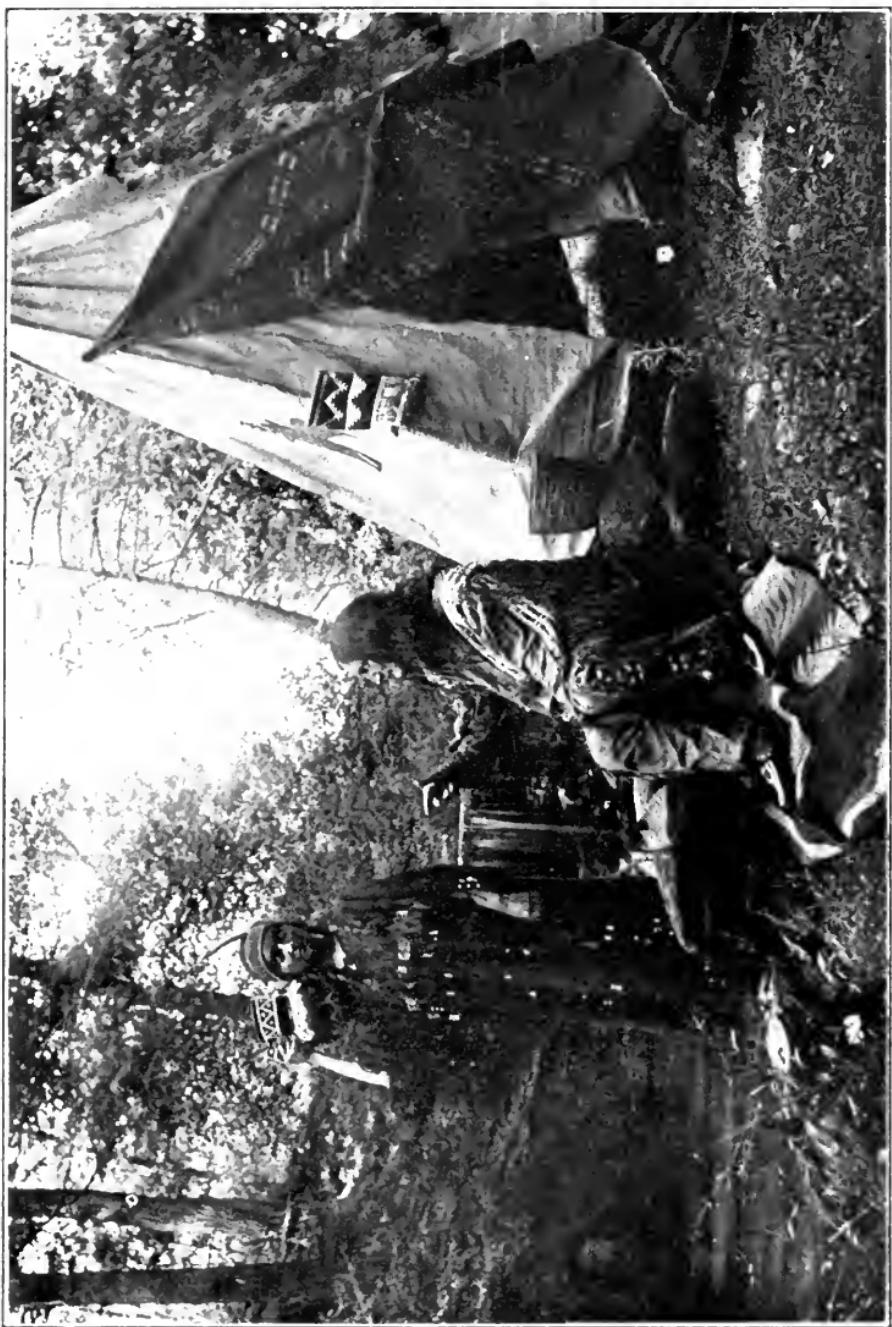
### II. BREATHING

Why touch on such a subject in connection with photoplaying? one might ask. It is true that voice culture is not important in this work, but it is equally true that strong well-developed lungs are essential to good health, and good health is one of the most important qualifications for success in any line of endeavor—perhaps *the* most important.

So, in passing, it is not amiss to urge the importance of vocal and breathing exercises as a vital part of the study. Regular breathing practice is a habit to be encouraged. In this humdrum world of working-to-win we are apt to neglect this part of our physical machinery. It is true we breathe without thought and effort, but few inhale deeply and exhale correctly.

While practicing, stand with the weight of the body on the balls of the feet with the toes turned outward at an easy angle. Always inhale through the nose, taking sufficient breath to perform all the uses to which nature puts it. Few persons inhale sufficient to keep the blood pure. One of the best general exercises for practice is taken thus:

When standing (or seated, if preferred), head and shoulders well up, back unsupported and spine erect, inhale deeply while mentally counting ten, hold the breath for ten counts, then expel through the lips, again counting ten for the exhaling. Re-



MISS FRANCES AGNEW, THE AUTHOR, AS AN INDIAN MAID, IN "A PICNIC IN DAKOTA," A PHOToplay BY  
THE CRYSTAL FILM CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

peat this while taking some simple arm exercises, also exhaling on the vowel sound "ah" pitched on all the tones of the voice consecutively. Exhaling on all the other vowel sounds is equally good practice.

Always practice vocal exercises in a freely ventilated room, preferably before an open window or outdoors in dry weather conditions. The results of your practice will be astounding. The chest and lungs will be developed, the blood purified, catarrhal and throat afflictions materially alleviated, and your health and vitality in every way improved.

Remember also that Thos. A. Edison, the genius, has just perfected what he considers his most wonderful invention—the talking moving picture machine. These "talking movies" are now being exhibited. The acting is practically the same as on the legitimate stage, the camera photographing the actions and the talking machine recording the voice simultaneously. It is obvious that the voice, its resonance and adaptability to the record will be the first consideration, and the second, one's type and ability as a photoplayer. Hence those "movie" actors and actresses who have a strong healthy physique and a good clear speaking voice, developed by breathing and vocal exercises, will have an advantage over those who, while possessing the voice perhaps, are lacking in ability.

Every effort to become a better player and round

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

out your art is a step toward the coveted goal of success, though you may not be able to see it in just this way in the beginning of your career.

### III. FACIAL EXPRESSION AND PANTOMIME PRACTICE

Facial expression is perhaps the most important part of photoplaying. It is an art within itself. The scenes and actions alone do not tell the minute details of the story. After all is said and done the eyes are really the focus of one's personality in photoplaying. With the aid of other facial features they can express almost all the emotions and passions felt by a human soul. These expressions cannot be taught or merely assumed. It is not enough to say that the brows contract, eyes glare and lips are pressed together in anger, or the eyes are opened wide with the semblance of a twinkle in the corners and a smile on the lips in surprise with pleasure, or the wide-open eyes stare into space and the lips slightly open to express surprise with fear, or a mournful look in the depths of the eyes, the mouth drooping, denotes grief and despair, or the eyes are dancing and the face is lit with a sunny smile in excited enjoyment or rejoicing. These are merely principles for expressions which have no depth of sincerity unless impelled by intense feeling.

A good method of study and practice (always

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

before a mirror, so as to follow your own progress in clear expression) is thus:

First, think of some simple story or create an original plot for yourself, making the principal character your own type. The story is to be told by the expressions of the face and the attitudes of the body.

Next, jot down the various emotions and sentiments felt by the principal character and analyze within your own mind why. Then picture to yourself mentally the actions which would lead up to this emotion if the plot were actually unfolded on the screen.

This should awaken within you the very feeling, almost, of the character and enable you to portray in practice this principal rôle throughout the different scenes, imagining the other characters and your stage settings. The value of such pantomimic study and practice cannot be overestimated.

This practice is similar to a most important feature of the prescribed course of study in the leading dramatic schools, both in the legitimate and motion picture departments. It is recognized as an independent training. Of course, it is difficult for one character alone to convey the plot, but some idea of the thought in mind can be gained by the student's expressions, poses and movements, and his ability is judged accordingly.

Below is given a list of the emotions and sentiments which find portrayal in the expressions of the

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

face and the actions and attitudes of the body when the player is in full sympathy with the story and feels the part he is conveying:

Rejoicing	Ecstasy
Enjoyment with excitement	Melancholy
Determination	Dignity
Anger with control	Flippancy
Petulance	Tenderness with pity
Patience	Tenderness with love
Surprise with pleasure	Hopefulness
Surprise with pain	Sympathy
Surprise with fear	Kindness
Excitement with anger	Cruelty
Kindly reproof	Pathos
Angry reproof	Grief
Grandeur	Despair
Pride	Agony
Arrogance	Suspicion
Defiance	Threatening
Begging	Indignation
Courage	Caution
Hatred	Anxiety—peevish
Love	Anxiety—a mother's
Eagerness	Madness

Taking each of these emotions separately, think of some sentence or lines cloaking that emotion, and the pose then taken should be the result of the feeling awakened by this thought and your sym-



MISS GWENDOLINE PATES, A LEADING LADY WITH THE PATHÉ FRERES CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

pathy with its meaning. Notice particularly your facial expression in these attitudes. Many of the emotions above can be clearly expressed by the eyes and other features alone.

Get in sympathy with your subject, practice in this way and you will be amazed at the results and the force and control gained over the art of expression.

### IV. OBSERVATION

The school of observation is among the best one can attend. Follow its principles in every part of your daily life. When watching a photoplay, do not merely enjoy its story and the unraveling of its plot, but take from the actors portraying it lessons which will be of vital assistance to you in your personal training. Note the grace of movement, walking, rising, sitting, bowing, management of trains, etc., handling of objects on the stage, etc. Take an idea or situation from the play and later practice its portrayal yourself, but do not imitate. In imitation one loses individual touches and personality. Strive for originality, practice diligently and remember:

“The more we work, the more we win.”

## PART V

### HOW A MOTION PICTURE ENGAGEMENT IS OBTAINED

If the "stage-struck" one lives in or near New York he probably knows from hearsay something of the opportunities of this work. If he is so unfortunate—or shall we say, so very fortunate—as to be distantly removed from the Great White Way undoubtedly he knows little or nothing of the business end of motion picture acting.

Though some openly affirm that it is impossible to become a photoplayer without having had previous professional experience on the legitimate stage, yet the fact that there are to-day many successful photplayers who had no previous training or experience whatever disproves this assertion. Their natural abilities and talent, coupled with an alert sense of study by observation, etc., enabled them to go on the "picture stage" immediately.

Naturally these players did not begin as "leads." Few do, either in legitimate or picture work. Whenever an actor or actress *starts* at the top, those on the inside of theatrical circles are quick to assert, possibly with a tinge of jealousy or merely the repetition of Dame Rumor, "Oh, he's in all

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

right—got influence,” or “Well, why shouldn’t she, when she’s got a pull?” This is one of the weaknesses of human nature and will always be thus. However, those who do start at the top are very few and far between and cannot be taken as examples.

## THEATRICAL AGENCIES

In practically every line of work there are employment agencies which make a business of filling outside positions in return for a certain share of the salary earned by the successful applicant. Some agencies demand a fee for registration, but this usually applies to those furthering the interests of business, not “art.” Few theatrical agencies ask more than one-half of the second week’s salary, or, its equivalent, five per cent. of the salary earned for ten weeks. The latter form of payment is certainly more convenient to the player. Then, too, some engagements, especially in the legitimate (and it has been known in picture work, too), are so unfortunate as to be of less than ten weeks’ duration, due perhaps to the failure of the company or the failure of the player to “make good,” and in that event the full commission is not due.

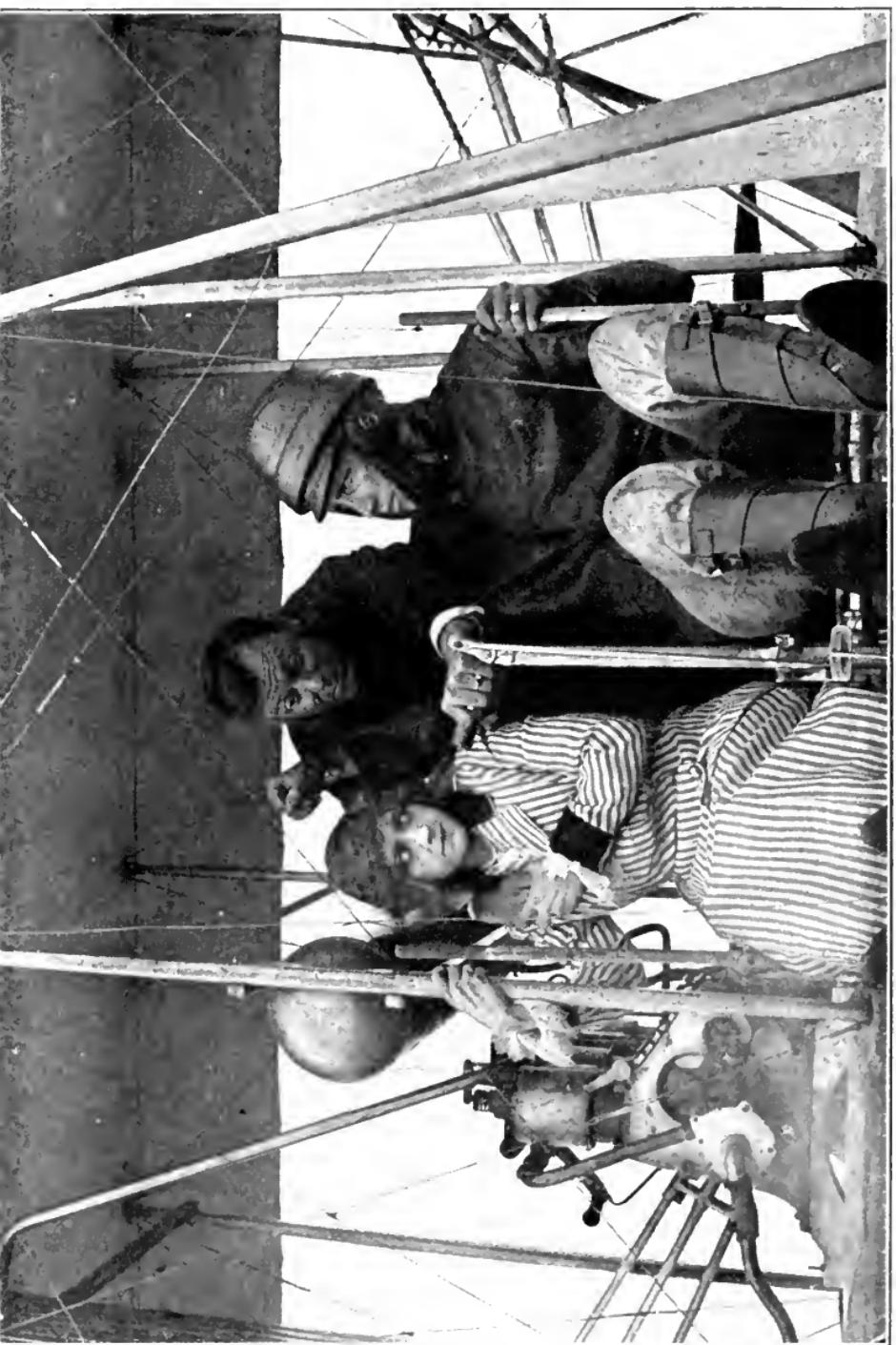
In “The Windy City of the West,” Chicago, which is rapidly becoming a producing center, there are many theatrical agencies, and one or two here and there in the larger cities of the country, but

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

the majority of them are located on THE Broadway in New York City—the real center of all amusement interests.

In times past theatrical agencies had nothing to do with picture work. However much they may have desired the commissions, yet, following the example then set by the legitimate managers, they scoffed at the idea of placing “artists” with a film company. They became haughtily indignant whenever a “hard-up” actor, with poor prospects, even suggested such a step. The players were, therefore, engaged by the picture producers direct, frequently through newspaper ads. Now, however, with the complete change which public opinion has undergone in its attitude toward motion pictures in general, there has come a similar change in the stand taken by the legitimate managers of first rank and by their near neighbors in the business, the agencies. Managers are no longer averse to engaging actors and actresses who have taken a plunge into picture work and agencies are likewise ready and willing to accept the business and furnish the players from their seemingly infinite list.

A splendid evidence of this is the recent contract made by Mr. David Belasco, the world-famous dramatic manager, with Miss Mary Pickford, lovingly known all over the country as “Little Mary,” formerly star with the Biograph and the Imp Companies—by which Miss Pickford was to leave the pictures for a time at least and appear as “Juliet,”



MISS GWENDOLINE PATIS IN A SCENE FROM A PATHÉ FRÈRES PHOTOPLAY, "AN AEROPLANE LOVE AFFAIR."



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

the little blind girl, in his fairy play production, "A Good Little Devil," one of the biggest Broadway successes of the season of 1912-1913.

Mr. Belasco's decision to secure Miss Pickford's signature to a contract covering her appearance in this production was the result of his impressions after seeing her on the screen in one of the Biograph releases. Her salary in motion pictures was reported to be \$12,500 a year, or an average of \$250 a week, and she is said to have accepted Mr. Belasco's offer because it meant an even better opportunity financially and otherwise. In its criticism of the production, *The Theatre Magazine*, February, 1913, issue, stated: "If Mary Pickford, who plays the blind little girl, is a product of 'the movies,' then commend us to the photoplay posing as a school for acting. Contrary to expectations her facial expression was restrained rather than overemphatic and her diction was rarely fine."

The attitude of the managers is best conveyed by the interest which Mr. Daniel Frohman has taken in motion pictures. Some time ago Mr. Frohman was quoted as saying:

"I can't see why a dip into the moving picture business should hurt any good actor. This outcry against the new business seems to me much like the fuss made over vaudeville when it was a new thing, fifteen or twenty years ago.

"When the old time variety acts were baptized vaudeville—a good name because nobody knew

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

what the word meant then and most people have respect for what they don't understand—it was said that no real artist would ever descend to vaudeville.

"Look at the situation now. Almost any artist will now go into vaudeville if the terms are big enough, and when the player wants to, he or she may return to the legitimate stage work and find as warm a welcome as ever. Miss Rose Coghlan, Messrs. W. H. Thompson, Robert Hilliard and a lot of others here, with Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, Mme. Rejane and Lady Beerhohm Tree on the other side, have played in vaudeville and some day may play in moving pictures."

(In passing, it is interesting to note that so far as Mme. Bernhardt and Miss Rose Coghlan are concerned his prophecy has already proved true. Miss Coghlan recently appeared as "Rosalind" in the Vitagraph Company's feature film of Shakespeare's comedy "As You Like It," while the world's greatest actress, Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, is delighting and mystifying the world itself by her wonderful acting of favorite characters which she has played for the screen.)

Thus Mr. Frohman not only approves of legitimate players "dipping" into motion picture work, but the fact that he has given up his personal interest in legitimate productions and is now an important figure in the motion picture business, being one of the organizers and moving spirits of The Famous Players Film Company, featuring the pictures of Mme. Bernhardt and other renowned

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

artists, is proof positive that he regards the industry as a vital component of the amusement world of to-morrow as well as of to-day. This is the attitude taken by many of the other high-class legitimate managers as well as the agencies.

These latter mediums, both dramatic and musical, are conducted along similar lines. An agency consists of one, two, three or more rooms, according to its financial responsibility, or perhaps according to the extent of its faith in advertising. Many concerns are prone to believe that much space in a large office building gives the impression of big business, and while this may be an expensive way of placing your wares before the world, yet we must admit that advertising in any form should and does pay to a certain extent. Suffice it to say, however, few of the high-class agencies can be said to do business in a "hole in the wall." The majority of them have nicely furnished offices, both public and private. They have what might be called a "Consultation Room" in which Dr. Manager or Director interviews the "patient" applicant; they have the private offices of the owner of the agency in which are kept records of business, and last, but not least, the "outside" room in which applicants may take a seat—if they happen in on those rare occasions when it is not crowded—or stand, and await their turn to be interviewed. Incidentally the beginner can gain a deal of valuable information from the conversation overheard in

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

these waiting rooms. It is most interesting, though frequently pitiful, to listen to the stories (some of them hard-luck tales) of both photo and legitimate players. What is truer than one could imagine and most difficult to understand is the fact that even all this fails to discourage real ambition—which is as it should be! The one who “gets there” is the one who “sticks,” and these experiences of others, however bitter they may be, should serve to separate the goats from the sheep—to utterly discourage and weed out those who are entirely unfit for the work, and to bring into the minds of those really qualified more serious thoughts of their undertaking, since it is to be “playing” which will mean work, hard work, and not all pleasure and happiness.

Since many of the motion picture artists are now placed through the agencies, all players readily realize that their assistance is invaluable and it is well to register with them. Among the most important dramatic and musical agencies in New York City, who are licensed to secure engagements for players and players for engagements, are the following:

Betts & Fowler.....	1402 Broadway
Packard Exchange.....	1416 Broadway
Bijou Fernandez.....	214 West 42nd St.
Chas. A. Goettler.....	1482 Broadway
Paul Scott.....	1402 Broadway



MISS GWENDOLINE PATES, IN A SCENE FROM A PATHÉ FRÈRES PHOToplay, "LOVE'S RENUNCIATION."

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

see me again." This same answer greets you on your next visit and perhaps your next and next, unless it is the busy season and he has calls from managers or directors for your type of player; but "never a lane without a turning," and to any one who has not the patience to stand these disappointments the theatrical ladder will be an almost infinite height, and he is best off before he seeks to climb it.

This is but one path to tread in seeking an engagement as a photoplayer. Another more successful method is to appeal direct to the film companies themselves.

Every company has its general director or supervisor, and two, three, four or more subdirectors, including those assigned to comedy subjects only, and those whose specialty is dramatic work. All permanent or stock players engaged are subject to the approval of the supervisor after he has seen the player's work on the screen, but trial engagements are made by the subdirector who uses the players thus employed for parts in the particular photoplays consigned to him for production. These directors, as a matter of fact, usually select the entire casts for their respective plays. If the cast is a small one it is selected from the regular stock company—those players who hold a contract with the management, stipulating a certain weekly compensation, regardless of the number of days they work. Their services, however, are at the command of the director daily, though unforeseen cir-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

cumstances, such as inclement weather, an exceedingly small cast production, etc., frequently give such players an occasional "day off," though their salaries continue the same, if under contract.

The number of players carried in the stock organizations differ with the various film companies. Some have as many as thirty or more on the regular list, both at the principal studio and in the western headquarters. Such a company includes five or six emotional and ingenue leads (actresses); about the same number of leading actors; three or four "heavies" (both actors and actresses) (this type is sometimes called the villain of the play); three or four character artists; two children for juveniles, and half a dozen or more minor players who serve for general business, playing various parts requiring some versatility. Other companies have perhaps ten or fifteen only in each stock organization, especially when playing in the New York studio. Some companies have only one stock organization, including both the comedy and dramatic players in each location. Others have separate stocks, one for comedy subjects, another for dramatic work, each set of players working under the supervision of the corresponding director.

## JOBBING

Many of the photoplays produced to-day require larger casts than the regular stock covers, and thus

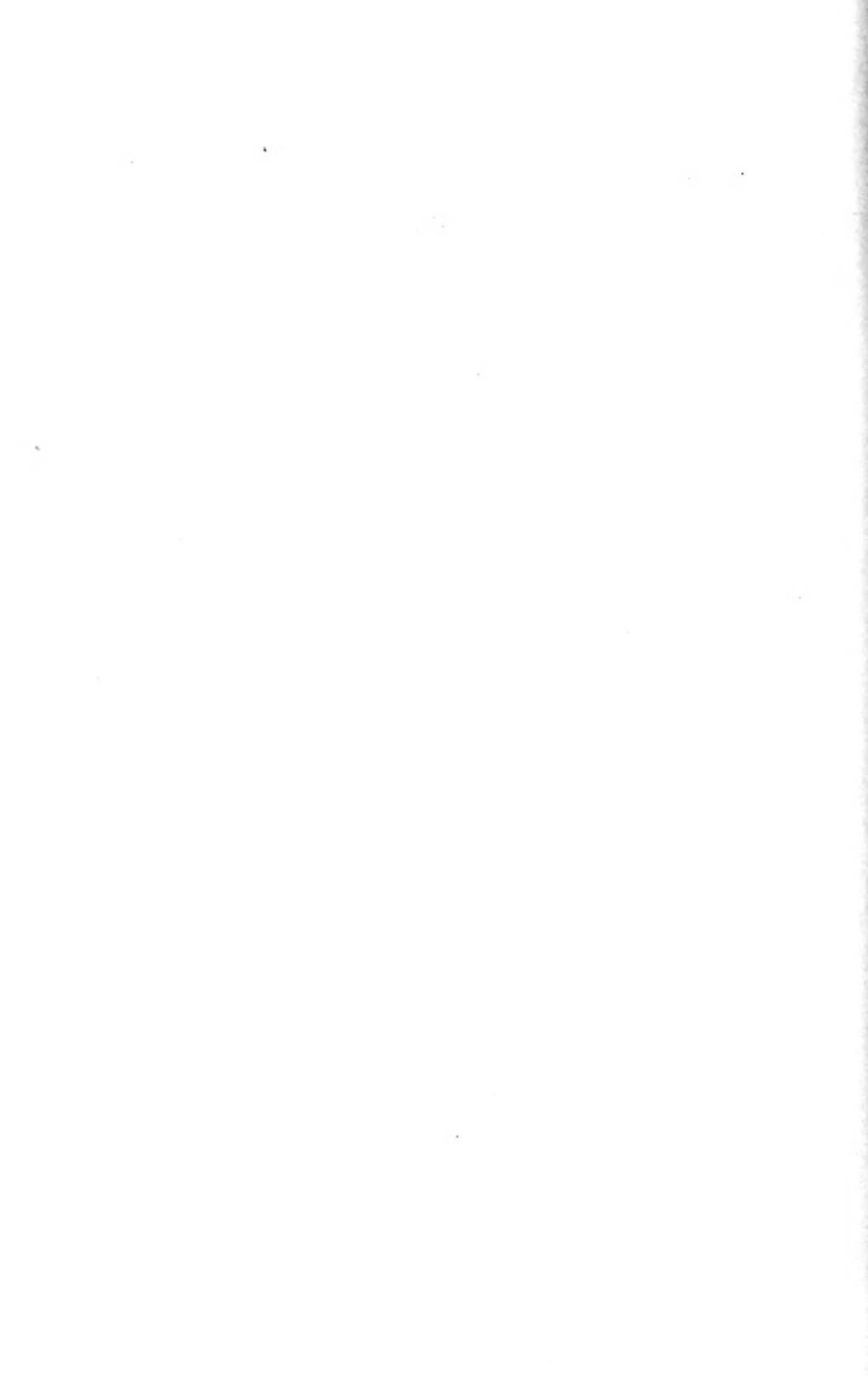
## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

require the services of many extra people. These players are employed for what is known as "jobbing," which is similar to "suping" on the legitimate stage, though a far more important calling and one which is followed in New York constantly by many most excellent actors and actresses who have no desire to work into the regular stock organizations. They are content to play with the different companies, deriving a varying income as a result—the amount ranging from \$15.00 to \$40.00 a week, according to the productions and weather conditions.

The largest film companies are located in or near New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, and also in the far West, California particularly, the latter companies having nothing but a business office in the East. These companies, as stated before, employ regular stock organizations at their principal studios and also maintain western headquarters and studios in California near the Pacific Coast. In addition to this, other stock organizations are formed and sent out from both eastern and western headquarters to find new scenery and atmosphere in various sections of the globe—south to Florida and Mexico, west to Colorado and among the Rockies, and north to British Columbia, Alaska and Canada. These companies, too, require the services of extra players, and it is frequently possible for a talented aspirant living in the neighborhood of such a company's location to thus lay

MISS GWENDOLINE PATES IN A SCENE FROM A PATHÉ FRÈRES PHOTOPLAY.





## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

the foundation for a successful career. However, Greater New York City is the center of all such interests, and sincere ambition, determination and patience will eventually lead to that point.

In the beginning the scenario or plot of the photoplay is accepted and reconstructed by the editor. He then submits it to the supervisor, who consigns the production to one of the subdirectors and he in turn is held largely responsible for its success. He must accept suggestions from the supervisor regarding any detail connected with the production, but he is usually given full authority so far as the cast is concerned and it devolves upon him to select from the almost infinite list on hand those players who are the types for the extra or jobbing parts.

Thus, the best method to pursue in seeking an engagement as a photoplayer is to apply to the various studios in person, if possible, on the special day set apart for registration, or whenever most convenient—meeting the gentleman whose duty it is to see the players, note their types and advise the directors of promising photplayers. A visit to the studio might also give you an opportunity to interview the directors personally. You then file a photograph and card, giving personal information such as name, address, phone number (if in the same locality), age, height, weight, color of hair, eyes and complexion; your measurements are also taken, to be followed by the company in fitting you with costumes for feature productions.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Or, if not possible to call, a personal letter addressed to the film company in which you are most interested—inclosing a photograph, personal description as above, and some general facts regarding individual circumstances—together with a self-addressed stamped envelope for reply—will usually bring you the advice and opinion of the company as to your availability for the work and your chances for success as a photoplayer. You may be the type for some particular line of parts, and for this reason secure the interest of the film company, inducing them to give you a trial engagement at a later opportunity, all circumstances considered favorable.

Your application to the film company thus places you on their list of available players and puts you in line for a possible opportunity to job, which is the first step toward a permanent engagement with the regular stock organization.

The principal film companies throughout the country are as follows:

### NEW YORK CITY:

Ammex Film Co. (office), 145 West 45th St.

\*Biograph Company, 11 East 14th St.

Comet Film Co., 344 East 32nd St.

\*Thomas A. Edison (Inc.), 2826 Decatur Ave.,  
Bedford Park.

General Publicity and Sales Co., 145 West 45th  
St.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Great Northern Co., 7 East 14th St.

Helen Gardner Motion Picture Co., 145 West  
45th St.

\*Kalem Company, 235 West 23rd St.

Lux Film Co., 10 East 15th St.

\*Melies Company, 204 East 38th St.

Majestic Motion Picture Co., 540 West 21st St.

Reliance Film Co., 540 West 21st St.

Republic Film Co., 145 West 45th St.

Kinemacolor Co., 1600 Broadway.

Keystone Co. (office), 42nd St. and Broadway.

Kay-Bee Co. (office), 42nd St. and Broadway.

Universal Co., Broadway and 48th St. (including  
the following, but all communications should  
be addressed to the Universal Co. direct):

Ambrosio American Co., 15 East 26th St.,  
N. Y.

Bison 101, Hollywood, California.

Champion Co., 145 West 45th St., N. Y.

Eclair Co., Fort Lee, N. J.

Crystal Co., Wendover and Park Aves.,  
N. Y.

Gem Co., Coytesville, N. J.

Imp Co., 515 West 56th St., N. Y.

Nestor Co., Hollywood, California.

Powers Co., 422 West 216th St., N. Y.

Rex Company, 573 Eleventh Ave., N. Y.

Victor Co., 573 Eleventh Ave., N. Y.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

### NOT IN NEW YORK:

American Film Co., 5th floor, Ashland Block,  
Chicago, Ill.

Atlas Co., 414 Century Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Broncho Film Co., 1712 Allesandro St., Los  
Angeles, Cal.

\*Cines Co., Geo. Kleine, 166 N. State St., Chicago,  
Ill.

\*Essanay Film Mfg. Co., 1333 Argyle St.,  
Chicago, Ill.

Gaumont Company, Flushing, N. Y.

Gene Gauntier Co., 737 Tallyrand Ave., Jackson-  
ville, Fla.

Kinemacolor Co., 4500 Sunset Boulevard, Los  
Angeles, Cal.

\*Lubin Mfg. Co., 20th St. and Indiana Ave.,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Monopol Company, 1339 Gordon St., Holly-  
wood, Cal. (Office, 145 West 45th St., N. Y.)

\*Pathé Frères, 1 Congress St., Jersey City  
Heights, N. J.

Pilot Film Corporation, 120 School St., Yonkers,  
N. Y.

\*Selig Polyscope Co., 20 E. Randolph St.,  
Chicago, Ill.

Solax Company, Fort Lee, N. J.

Thanhouser Co., New Rochelle, N. Y.

\*Vitagraph Co., E. 15th St. and Locust Ave.,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

**Note.**—Of the above those marked \* are licensed companies; the others independent.



MISS FRANCES AGNEW, AS LUCIUS, THE BOY, IN SHAKESPEARE'S "JULIUS CAESAR.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

### TYPES

Scene: A manager's office. Stern manager, in brief monosyllabic conversation with ambitious actor (or actress) who stands cringing before the mogul, "putting up" a good plea for some particular part in a particular play of which he has heard, or perhaps seeking an engagement in a feature film to be made. He is sure he can play the part and makes an earnest effort to so convince the manager or director. That worthy personage, however, gives one glance at the aspirant, and with a wave of his hand he brings the brief interview to an abrupt end by saying: "Sorry, but you're not the type for the part. You might come back and see me again. There may be something later."

Oh, that word "type"! In days of yore, an artist was always an artist. By the aid of make-up and artistic temperament a young man or woman played a character many years his senior, or an older player was likewise considered capable of giving an artistic youthful characterization. The advancing years, however, have changed this opinion. To-day the cry of the managers is for types; a child must be played by a child, sweet sixteen must be sweet sixteen, not only in years, but in appearance "off stage" as well as on; the stage mother, aunt, old maid, etc., must be played by actresses possessing the appearance in private life; the handsome hero, the gallant old gentleman—each must look the

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

part to a certain extent when engaged. Managers are fully aware that facial make-up is a marvelous aid. By its intelligent use a complete change in appearance is possible. It is a wonderful disguise. There are other ways, too, classed under the subject of "make-up," by which a small or large physique can be changed to suit the character. A striking physique or a bent withered figure is attained by skillful padding and costuming. Of course, it is necessary in the creation of some characters to adhere to these old methods, but for the most part managers to-day demand "types."

While it is a great asset to the legitimate stage to have each character played by that distinct "type," if that type is also an artist, yet it is far more important in photoplays. The camera is so accurate that every little detail counts. Hence the film companies find it more satisfactory to keep on file a photograph of each applicant for an engagement and thus when casting a new picture the director has access to these photographs, judges the applicant accordingly, picks his "types," and then phones, telegraphs or occasionally writes the player that he or she can work in the new picture.

Thus your opportunity! Sometimes it takes weeks and months to secure it. This depends on many things—your own photo, the demand for your type of player or the cast required for the different photoplays. However it may be, once your opportunity comes and is grasped by you, your future

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

success or failure lies in a large measure in the hollow of your hand. Patient attentiveness to every detail, every minute instruction, and careful observation at all times will do much to further any career, and these qualities are especially essential in the moving picture studio, once you have gained access to one of these most interesting and fascinating workshops.

## PART VI

### SALARIES OF MOTION PICTURE PLAYERS

Naturally the most important point to be considered, aside from the fame resulting from a career on the screen, is the financial reward it brings. In comparison with many other professions the salaries on the legitimate stage are small fortunes—at least to some—but the salaries of photoplayers are even greater. The salary itself is about the same paid to the player of a similar line of parts on the legitimate stage, but consider the difference in seasons! There are no weeks of long tedious rehearsals without any remuneration whatever and with the fear of failure and sudden closing, even after only one performance, if the play does not “get over.” On the screen stage, rehearsals are a part of the regular work covered by a stipulated daily or weekly salary. The motion picture artist has a profession which pays him a guaranteed salary all the year round—52 weeks—unless he wishes to take a vacation, and this is usually subject to his own volition. In comparison with the regular legitimate season of an average of thirty weeks (in rare cases thirty-five or forty, but in



MISS MIRIAM NESBITT, A LEADING LADY WITH THE EDISON CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

many instances not more than twenty weeks), think of the added income allotted to the photoplayer whose season is both summer and winter, with hardly any deviation except in the nature of the photoplays—the summer being given over to those requiring more woodland or exterior scenes, rather than studio sets.

The weekly salaries of motion picture artists in the regular stock companies range from \$35.00 to \$60.00 for minor players, and from \$75.00 to \$250.00—and even more in exceptional cases—for the leads and stars.

The beginner or one engaged on trial or for a minor part in a large cast production receives from \$2.50 to \$10.00 each day he plays in the pictures. From this position he graduates into the guaranteed class—that is, one of a number of players who hold a “guarantee” contract with the company stipulating employment for two, three, four or five days weekly at a specified daily compensation of from \$5.00 to \$10.00. If their services are needed for more than the guaranteed number of days the additional time means extra salary in the pay envelope—the stipulated remuneration for each day over the guarantee. For instance, a player holding a four-day guarantee contract at the minimum rate of \$5.00 a day receives \$20.00 a week. If his services are required for an additional day, or two days perhaps, to complete a picture begun under the guarantee, this adds \$5.00 or \$10.00 (or more ac-

## **MOVING PICTURE ACTING**

cording to the fixed rate) to his amount for that week.

The next step up is to a position as one of the regular stock company, thus ranking in the \$35.00 to \$60.00 class. Then as the player adds to his experience, becomes identified with the productions of his company, his name and work attracting the attention of motion picture spectators the world over and thus giving him universal fame and popularity, his value to the film company likewise increases, and thus he advances to the position of lead or star at the very high salaries. It is truly a most profitable profession and one in every way worthy of the ambitions and efforts of talented amateurs all over the country.

## PART VII

### DO'S AND DON'TS TO THE PROSPECTIVE PHOTOPLAYER

Always do your best.

Consider no part of so little importance as to warrant anything but your best portrayal. The majority of the leading players and stars began as "extras," and by infusing into rôles which were really little more than "mob" parts all the sincerity and natural emotion within their scope they were chosen for regular stock companies, and have thus risen to the heights of fame and success.

Don't look at the camera when acting in the pictures. It detracts from every vestige of natural work.

Don't argue with the director. He knows his business well or would not hold the position, and, since the burden of responsibility for a good production rests upon him, follow his methods and directions for mutual good.

Don't exhibit a "know-it-all" disposition. Be ever alert to add to your ability by any suggestion which may be offered from one of authority and

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

judgment, accepting it not as a criticism, but as an incentive.

Don't lose your wits and poise if the director reprimands. It is seldom intended for anything but your own good and the success of the photoplay.

Don't overact! Be natural in all your portrayals, actually living the rôles—for the moment, of course. Natural actions and expressions are the secret of success on the screen.



MISS MIRIAM NESBITT IN A SCENE FROM AN EDISON PHOTOPLAY TAKEN IN ENGLAND.



## PART VIII

### HEIGHTS OF SUCCESS AS A PHOTOPAYER

In general, the profession of photoplaying is not only one of the most progressive of the day, but it is in reality a world in itself. Its members have formed social clubs, managed benefit entertainments for sundry good purposes, and in every way aided in the progress of their profession and its good to the community at large. It is a calling which affords an opportunity for pleasant and very profitable results to both amateur and professional alike—not merely an employment for to-day, but a work which is rapidly forging ahead as one of the principal professions of life. The fruits of its labor are a source of infinite pleasure and instruction within the reach of all classes, rich and poor alike, and it is little wonder then, in view of the widespread success of motion picture films, that the artists shown therein are the recipients of universal praise, and within two or three years enjoy a fame and fortune which the legitimate player, in many instances, struggles through long years of disappointment to attain, and more often than otherwise drops from the race before the goal is reached. The legit-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

imate player is subject to the hardships of constant and hurried travel to display his talents—at least until he has created a demand for his services as a Broadway artist; while the photoplayer “sits steady in the boat,” having the satisfaction of knowing that his work is entertaining thousands all over the world, and his name is known everywhere, even in the smallest towns, while he goes on with other productions. His work necessitates travel, too, but not with such inconveniences as that of his brother behind the footlights. He remains longer in one locality, has a chance to make friends and enjoy social diversions without the thought that to-morrow means “moving on again,” perhaps to a series of “one-night stands.”

In addition to this, the opportunities for the amateur and less experienced professional are greater than on the legitimate stage. After a player has obtained a stock engagement with one company his position is “made” and a change from one film company to another is entirely voluntary, usually for a greater financial inducement. There are apparently no limits to the heights of success. Many of the “screen stars” have made small fortunes by their work in the pictures and have accumulated sufficient to invest in another company. That charming comedienne, Florence Lawrence, is a notable example of wonderful success, due to talent, personality, and perseverance. After being featured by the Imp, Lubin, and other companies, she later

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

graduated into her own company, the Victor. She has subsequently severed her connection with the Victor, which has entered the Universal combination, and is now said to be making plans for still another Florence Lawrence Film Producing Co.

Then, there is the Helen Gardner Co., the Marion Leonard Monopol Film Co., and the Gene Gauntier Co. All of these actresses began in small parts with different companies, rapidly forged to the front, and accumulated capital for investment in new companies, thus becoming their own managers. The latter, Miss Gauntier, one of the most clever and attractive actresses on the screen, was, until recently, a Kalem star, appearing in many notable releases of this company and traveling thousands of miles around the globe, through the Holy Land, Egypt, Ireland, and other countries of the Old World, to secure natural settings for many two and three reel subjects—Biblical and historical—the majority of them her own adaptations or produced from her original scenarios. She is now at the head of her own company, releasing historical and other two-reel subjects, which have made marked success.

The world-famous favorite, G. M. Anderson—"Broncho Billy"—is part owner of the Essanay Film Co., located in Chicago, as well as its star actor and principal director. Many other well-known photo-actors have risen from minor salaries as small part players to topnotch positions as actor-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

directors, not only playing principal parts, but also directing the production of various photoplays. Harold Shaw, formerly with the Edison, Arthur Johnson and Romaine Fielding with the Lubin, and James Kirkwood with Victor, are notable examples of success in this double capacity.

These few instances merely give a faint idea of the success and fortune which may be acquired in the "movies." It is little wonder that talented amateurs are daily entering the lucrative ranks of motion picture players and climbing to the heights of success, but with it all there is still a demand and opportunity for the capable player. It has been demonstrated in every film company that the talented and capable actor and actress—amateur or professional—experiences no difficulty in "breaking into" this delightful and fascinating work. It offers a wonderful field for individuality, and, judging from the rapid progress in the past and present, no ambition to attain success is too great to be realized. The limits of perfection in motion pictures—both in photography and in character portrayals—are yet to be reached, and, in the words of Mr. John Bunny, the famous Vitagraph star and greatest comedian on the screen, "There's nothing like it!"

Muriel Ostriche  
"Eclair Stock Co."

With very much love  
Muriel Ostriche

MISS MURIEL OSTRICHE, THE YOUNG STAR OF THE THANHOUSER CO.



## PART IX

### PRODUCING A PHOTOPLAY

#### THE MOTION PICTURE STUDIO

It is doubtful if there are any two studios which are alike in every particular. Some of them (the American Pathé, located in Hoboken, N. J., for instance) are topped and walled with glass, thus giving daylight and sunlight for work. However, this is said to be of very little advantage, since the weather conditions are so changeable that few perfect picture days, when work in the studio can be followed without artificial lighting, are available, and even these open studios have installed a multitude of special electric lamps of untold voltage capacity which are hung from the ceiling in every studio above stage and also on movable frames which can be adjusted to reflect on the stage at just the right angle desired. The lighting system perfected for the vast rooms, almost auditoriums, fitted up for studios, is nothing short of wonderful. The lights are so strong as to reveal to the naked eye the most minute veins on the face and hands of a player, casting over everything a purplish tint which is sometimes blinding.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

### THE STAGE—FOREGROUND AND SIDE LINES

The motion picture stage, whether for interior or exterior scenes, is very much smaller than the legitimate stage, and much smaller than it would appear to be when the picture is shown on the screen. The front line, foreground, or footlights is less than ten feet across. This, of course, increases as you go "up stage," away from the camera, but there is a corresponding decrease in the size of the figure and in the effect of the expressions.

The term "foreground" is used to designate the front line "down stage" (closest to the camera or the footlights in the legitimate stage), and the "side lines" are the left and right limits of the space focused by the camera. All action within these lines is caught by the camera. Woe to the player who steps beyond the boundaries! He is then out of the picture, usually spoiling the scene, necessitating a retake.

The foreground and side lines of the studio stage are chalked or roped off on the floor and are usually "fixed," though sometimes the action requires a larger or smaller space (making a corresponding difference in the size of the figures on the screen), and the lines are adjusted accordingly. The lines of an exterior stage are marked by rocks, rope, stakes, or anything at hand and can be set anywhere.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Nature or the progress of civilization placed the "props," and the director and camera man select the spot for each scene according to the plot of the story and the sunlight available.

Though not infrequently actual interiors are utilized, very often the rooms in which the plot was originally unfolded, especially in cases where particular settings are desired for historical or other large productions, yet a majority of the interior scenes are made in the film company's studio with ordinary painted scenery and properties. This is also true of many exterior scenes. Some of the most beautiful "outdoor" settings, which one would almost refuse to believe were not the handiwork of Mother Nature, have been made in the studio with painted trees, artificial flowers, grass and shrubbery, and a sky "drop." As a general rule, however, the players travel out into the open country for woodland scenes or excite the attention of curious pedestrians who gather "like bees around a hive" to witness the "taking" of some thrilling street scene.

In passing, it is interesting to note that many of these exterior scenes, taken on crowded city thoroughfares, frequently result disastrously—for the moment, at least—to both players and director. Several years ago, so the story goes, when photoplays were not quite so well known, the Vitagraph Company was taking a scene on a quiet residence street in New York. The action required the use

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

of an imposing corner dwelling and, according to the plot, the heroine and her father drove up to the house in a beautiful touring car, alighted and entered the front door. At the crucial moment two thieves, who had been "on the inside" appropriating some of the interior possessions, entered the scene from a side window, having heard the owner returning, and, seeing the auto at the door, they decided to "beat a hasty retreat" by this mode of departure. The scenes showing the arrival of the automobile and its occupants' exit into the house were duly rehearsed and taken. Then the camera was set and the "thieves'" hasty entrance on the scene through the window and their hurried exit in the car were rehearsed, the signal given, and the actual "taking" in operation, when, Presto! around the corner came a bicycle policeman. If needed in such a locality at that time he could hardly have been found, and was doubtless then on his way to give assistance to some fellow custodian of the peace. Whatever his mission, he arrived on this scene a moment too soon. Just as the "thieves" made a dash for the car and drove off the policeman rode up, witnessed the action and, with unbelievable speed, followed them and with his trusty revolver prevented their escape. He brought the culprits back to the scene of action to confront the director, camera man, and other players, who stood watching his actions, transfixed with astonishment. Then, in almost breathless exclamations, each



MR. CARLYLE BLACKWELL, LEADING MAN WITH ONE OF THE STOCK COMPANIES OF THE KALEM CO.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

sought to explain that they were merely taking moving pictures, all working together—and they succeeded so well in convincing the policeman that they *were* “working together” that he (with visions of promotion as a reward for his “haul” no doubt) marched them all to the station house. Of course, the matter was there satisfactorily explained, to the embarrassment of the policeman, but the incident caused some little inconvenience and loss of time to the company, as well as spoiling a well-rehearsed scene and about a hundred feet of innocent film.

Let us suppose, now, that a photoplay containing about thirty scenes, both exteriors and interiors, has been accepted by the editor and approved by the supervisor who has gone over the manuscript, constructing the director's working papers and giving him instructions as to its production. The photoplay is then in the director's hands. He chooses the players for the principal characters from the regular stock organization and they are notified to report at a stated time, nine A. M. or earlier, on the day set for the beginning of the picture. The cast calls for more players than are at leisure in the stock company, others working with the second and third directors perhaps. He then casts the remaining characters from the photographs on file according to types. These players are notified by telephone, telegraph, or letter, to report at the set time.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

We will suppose that you have entered the profession, now have a trial engagement with this film company, and are also notified to report.

### COSTUMES

The majority of photoplayers are expected to furnish costumes or wardrobe for all modern plays. Historical or classic plays are known as costume productions, and the special costumes for these photoplays are usually found in the wardrobe of the company.

This is probably a modern piece and you are, therefore, told to bring suitable costumes for the part of Rose, a college girl, or Mary, a wealthy society belle; Dick, the hero blessed with riches, or Tom, the ragged street tramp, or Jim, the poor but honest laborer. It all depends on the plot and characters, of course. In passing, it is well to know that strictly white materials are usually barred. Pure white is hard and glaring on the screen, so all costumes, for both men and women, to be shown as white (including waists, shirts, stiff collars, ties, etc.) are more acceptable if cream or yellow. This photographs a clear, soft white. Some minor articles of this color, such as maids' aprons, men's collars, etc., dyed to a cream tint, are kept on hand in the studio wardrobe.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

To continue, perhaps the weather is none too propitious for outdoor work, or the studio stage may not be available later, so it is decided to take the interior scenes first. You have received full instructions and accordingly report at the studio at the time appointed. Upon arrival you consult the director, who approves or makes some changes in the costumes chosen, and you enter the dressing-room with several others, or alone, as the case may be, ready for the day's work.

### MAKE-UP

Rouge, powder, cosmetic, foundation sticks, and cold cream are furnished by most of the studios, but it is far more satisfactory to work with one's own tools. Very little make-up is used for "straight" parts—that is, a character very like yourself in age, type, and appearance. The straight make-up is the simplest and most frequently used, especially in photoplays where the question of types is so carefully considered. This consists of a delicate foundation of flesh color grease paint, the tint a little deeper for men, in order to give a faint ruddy appearance. Just a particle of this is used, about the size of a pea being sufficient. Before rubbing it thoroughly into the skin, however, slightly massage with a little cold cream as a first foundation to cleanse and keep the pores and tissues pure.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Outline *the lips* with rouge. Enlarge *the eyes* by using a black or dark blue stick to darken the upper lid and also a slight line on the lower lid. Extend a tiny line of black from the outer corners of the eye to add length, and dot the inner corners with just a touch of red. Avoid getting these cosmetics in the eyes. Accentuate *the eyebrows* with just a line of black following the outline of the brow and extending the line about one-sixteenth of an inch beyond the outer corners of the eyes. *The eyelashes* are frequently "beaded" to make them more conspicuous. This is done by melting black cosmetic—in a teaspoon over a lighted candle is the usual way—touching the liquid to the lashes with a brush sold for this purpose, or, preferably, with an ordinary rosewood stick. The end of the stick dipped in the black liquid and brushed lightly across the lashes accomplishes the result and does not injure the eye.

Do not apply any rouge except to the lips. Bloom on the cheeks would "take" dark, giving a sunken appearance to the face.

After making-up thus, powder the face entirely to remove the greasy, shiny appearance. It is necessary to again "touch up" the lips and powder the face occasionally during a day's work in a warm studio or when out in the air for exterior scenes.

For whitening the neck, arms, and hands when necessary, any good liquid white preparation can be used.



MISS MAE HOTELY, IN A SCENE FROM A LUBIN PHOToplay.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Practice and observation of characters in real life will assist one to learn how to make up for any type, age, or nationality. An Indian or negro make-up differs only in the color of the foundation grease paint and in the thicker appearance of the lips. These different tints are carried by all the good make-up manufacturers, or can be purchased from reliable druggists. For some characters, of course, it is necessary to use a wig, mustache, etc., but these are furnished by the studios.

The directors are careful to see that no particularly noticeable make-up is put on, since this detracts from the effect of the picture. Strive for a clear, clean make-up, study your own features, and thus attain the best and most natural results.

After completing your make-up and dressing for the first scene, you are called to the studio with the remainder of the cast. The stage has been set and the camera placed. The director then briefly explains the plot of the play and you get a hazy idea of what it's all about. A moment later you are wakened from your reverie by the director's call: "Now we'll walk through scene 1." He hurriedly explains the action, you take your place and the scene is "walked through"—in other words, rehearsed. After suggestions from the director, a second rehearsal is held. Then, if just an ordinary unimportant scene, a third or fourth rehearsal is usually sufficient. All is then in readiness, and the director gives the call, "Ready, now be careful,

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

we're going to shoot it." He gives the camera man the word, a moment later shouts "Go," and the players begin the scene in earnest. Throughout its action may be heard the cranking noise of the camera, the dialogue of the players, and the voice of the director as he anticipates their lines, lest they forget, and hurries the action of the scene. "Now enter, see the boy! Good afternoon, Yes! Look at the girls! Give him the paper! Good-bye, I'll call again! Exit!! Stop! How many feet?" turning to camera man. If the scene is too long, it is rehearsed again and re-taken. Before and after each scene, the number of that particular scene is held before the camera and taken, for guidance when developing the picture. This is the procedure with every scene, both interiors and exteriors. Perhaps the action of other scenes takes place in the same setting. If so, the intervening scenes are passed and these taken before the setting is changed. The order of taking does not affect the completed film, since the scenes are pieced together and connected when developed.

Exterior work is, perhaps, more interesting than interior, especially during the summer season. A big touring car transports the players, directors, camera man, assistants, and all necessary paraphernalia to the location selected, and here the same procedure takes place as for interior scenes.

To continue the supposition we will say that the first two or three days are spent in the studio on

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

interiors. Then the call is given and two or three days (a week or more being required for the taking of an average full reel photoplay, under ordinary conditions) are devoted to the exterior scenes. You arrive at the studio as usual or earlier, make up and dress, and are then given a "joy ride" to the site selected for the day's work, carrying with you such articles of make-up and costume as will be needed. If the day is bright and sunny, the scenes can be taken without interruption, but if clouds darken the horizon it is frequently necessary to stand idly by, after carefully rehearsing a scene, to await the appearance of "Old Sol" and his willingness to contribute his cheery rays. The setting sun gives the signal for the return trip to the studio, and thus your day is done.

To the player taking exterior scenes is more pleasure than work. Usually a light lunch is carried if the day is to be spent in the woods, and thus the atmosphere of a picnic prevails. Of course, some exteriors, water scenes, etc., are fraught with hazardous risks which have met with fatal but unavoidable results. However, every precaution is taken to insure the player against accidents when engaged in daring scenes, and, as a rule, little or no fear is felt.

No other branch of acting gives the player such pleasant surroundings nor furnishes such healthy invigorating occupation as motion picture work. During the summer season companies are located

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

in the mountains, on the seashore, near delightful resorts—in fact, everywhere—to take advantage of all the wonders of Nature as well as the results of man's ingenuity. These settings, used as the background for various photoplays of every type—comedy, drama, tragedy, etc.—both educational and entertaining—carry life and love into lives, and, in turn, into homes, which are probably touched in no other way and perhaps get no other insight into the beauties of the outside world; and for the very lowest cost possible, within the reach of the masses, furnish a never-ending source of amusement and instruction to the whole known world.



MISS FLORA FINCH, OF THE VITAGRAPH CO.



## PART X

### [STATEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PHOTOPLAYERS

It is indeed interesting to read the opinions of established successful motion picture actors and actresses regarding the profession, its possibilities and opportunities.

### EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF MISS GWENDOLINE PATES, LEADING LADY WITH THE PATHÉ FRÈRES (AMERICAN) FILM COMPANY

Dainty little Miss Gwendoline Pates, one of the most fascinating actresses on the screen and leading lady with the American Pathé Company, is most enthusiastic. Her keen ambition and charming personality, which have been so largely responsible for her success, are reflected in her general statement regarding the work, as follows:

"The necessary qualifications for a successful photoplayer are that you must photograph well, and be able to express facially the idea that you want to convey to the audience.

"As to salaries, they vary as to the ability and

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

value of the players to the company. Generally speaking, the salaries range from forty dollars (\$40) a week up into the hundreds a week. The extras are paid five dollars (\$5) a day and sometimes ten dollars (\$10) a day. I like the work very much as the more I work the more room I see for improvement. The parts are so varied in characters,—one week a Sis Hopkins, the next a mother, and each character has its own special interest. I am very fond of light comedy although I like to work in a dramatic production once in a while too. I miss the inspiration that you get from the applause of your audience in the regular theater, so, of course, it is rather hard to finish a big emotional scene to find only the camera waiting to take the next scene. There is a great future for moving pictures and they have been of great help and benefit to thousands of men and women and children. I like to drop into a moving picture house and listen to the opinions of dozens of people as to your work. It is of great help to you.

“One of the most popular pictures of recent time is ‘The Aeroplane Love Affair’ in which Mr. George W. Beatty, the well known aviator, and myself are featured.

“I went up with Mr. Beatty six or seven thousand feet, and during the holidays I am going to learn to fly a biplane, taking lessons from Mr. Beatty.”

## STATEMENT OF MR. CARLYLE BLACKWELL, WITH THE KALEM CO.

In his statement which follows Mr. Carlyle Blackwell, one of the stars of the Kalem Company, has

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

made a prediction which will not only be realized in the future but is rapidly being felt by the amusement world at large to-day:

"What are the necessary qualifications for the making of a successful photoplay actor?

"I would say the same quality that is required on the stage,—ability and more ability. The picture industry is advancing so rapidly and with recognized writers and actors and actresses of international reputation entering the field, thus putting the photo-play on the same level with the legitimate play, I feel that more and more the actor of ability, the really capable man as compared with the simply handsome face, the broad shoulders or the trick of lifting an eyebrow, will be called upon to fill the ranks of the motion picture stock companies.

"The salaries for a picture stock company range about the same as for a dramatic stock company,—from forty to sixty dollars for small part players and as high as two hundred and fifty dollars for leading players."

### STATEMENT OF MISS MIRIAM NESBITT, LEADING LADY WITH THE EDISON CO.

Miss Miriam Nesbitt, leading lady for the Edison Company, and the object of the adoration of hundreds of motion picture enthusiasts, is most encouraging to those who would enter the same field. She says:

"To your first question: 'What are the necessary qualifications for the making of a successful photo-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

player?" I should say good features, or rather features and a figure that photograph well.

"An actress can never know whether she owes her success on the stage to voice, her coloring, or her appearance (personality) until she has tried picture work. If she fails at picture posing, and yet is a success on the stage, then undoubtedly she owes her success to her voice and coloring alone, and is a poor pantomimist. If she is a success on both the stage and screen, she may not have the divine spark, but no one can deny she is a 'good actress.' So, in a word, appearance and ability are the first qualifications for success on the screen. I believe many girls of talent and appearance drop from the ranks of the stage, because they have not the physical strength to endure the hardships of travel.

"To the next question, regarding a talented person's chances of entering the profession. I think their chances are excellent provided they can profit their position on the stage. There is no royal road to success in the moving picture world. You advance from a trial scene, to a day poser, then to the 'guarantee' class, and from there to the stock ranks. Regarding salaries I can only speak generally. I have heard that the average price for a beginner who plays a part is \$5.00 per day. Stock company people vary largely, but I should say \$75.00 per week is an average salary. Many work for less and some receive more. By the year, I think that the stock company moving picture actor fares as well if not better than players in first class New York or traveling companies."

MISS FLORA FINCH IN A SCENE FROM THE VITAGRAPHI PHOTPLAY,  
"LOVE FINDS A WAY."





## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

### STATEMENT OF MISS FLORA FINCH, CHARACTER ACTRESS WITH THE VITAGRAPH

Miss Flora Finch, that delightful Vitagraph player, whose line of parts is somewhat different from those of Miss Pates and Miss Nesbitt, modestly belittles her own efforts but nevertheless gives some most helpful advice and information regarding the profession. She writes:

"In reply to your question, 'What are the necessary qualifications for the making of a successful photoplayer?' I think in the first place—personality! Next—Never to think you know it all! There are many lesser requisites but to my mind these two are the leaders.

"Passing to your next question, I see no reason why a clever person should not easily 'get on' in the moving picture business. But then, any one with brains ought to get on under any circumstances. Plenty of grit is needed in all walks of life.

"The subject of salaries: Well! here we are in deep water in a minute. In general, one might say that stars draw a weekly salary in three figures; lesser lights range from somewhere around \$20.00 to \$80.00, and lastly extras who are paid \$2.50, \$3.00 and \$5.00 per day according to the company employing them and varying with the work they do.

"As for my own work,—well, I can't say much except that I am very interested in it, tho' sad to relate I dislike nearly everything I do. During the three or four years I have been in the business, I

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

have only been in four or five pictures where I was in any way satisfied with myself.

"Lately I have been in a picture from Dickens which I enjoyed working in partly because the story was good, partly because the cast was also good, and also because I wore my grandmother's wedding dress, a quaint old affair with short skirt and big puffed sleeves.

"Lastly, I wish to say a word of praise for the Vitagraph, the most human, the greatest-hearted of all the moving picture companies. Here's to Mr. Smith and Mr. Blackton! Long may they live!"

### STATEMENT OF MISS MAE HOTELY, OF THE LUBIN COMPANY:

"Jolly Mae Hotely," as she is affectionately called by her friends and admirers at the Lubin studio, is another enthusiast regarding her work in the pictures. Miss Hotely has played a number of character rôles which in "make-up" and portrayal are really "screams." She is truly an artist and especially "at home" in comedy rôles. She writes most interestingly as follows:

"To be an actor or actress upon the moving picture screen before the public, a good appearance is required above all else.

"The salaries range all the way from one dollar a day, given to the extra people used in mob scenes, up to one hundred and seventy-five dollars per week, possibly even higher, to motion picture stars.

"A large and varied wardrobe is also a necessity.

"The pictures cannot be photographed satisfac-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

torily on very dark or rainy days, as a good strong sunlight is required; therefore, there are a few days on which the actors have a little leisure.

"The pictures are taken in scenes and a certain space is allotted to an individual to work in, usually the space being marked off by lines. Of course, it is very difficult for an inexperienced person to keep within their grounds, and there are many different little tricks that have to be performed perfectly under great difficulties.

"While I do not discourage, I do not encourage girls in taking up this line of work, as it is a laborious task and a long hard road. In the old days the directors would probably aid in coaching a little bit, but nowadays they do not bother, as they expect perfection."

NOTE.—Judging from the observations and opinions of other photoplayers, however, it is difficult to agree with Miss Hotely's idea regarding the attitude of directors as expressed in the last sentence of her statement. It has been the experience of others, and more particularly of those who have attained success on the screen with no stage training whatever, that the directors have been and are most considerate, and in the majority of instances always willing to assist a beginner and to help the prospective photoplayer, whether amateur or professional, to an understanding of the details of the work which make it so different from ordinary acting on the speaking stage and also enable the talented and capable beginner to attain success in the pictures—as has been done in many, many noteworthy cases—without previous training or experience.

### INTERVIEW WITH MISS MURIEL OSTRICHE, OF THE THANHOUSER FILM COMPANY

One of the most wonderful examples of success as a photoplayer without having had any previous

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

experience or training in stage work is Miss Muriel Ostriche, a dainty, bewitching little miss of seventeen summers. Yes, it's true! She is only seventeen and really looks younger. A bubbling bit of enthusiasm regarding her own work and the wonderful future in store for motion pictures, Miss Ostriche is a most entertaining little talker, and merely being with her imbues one with the same instinct of a determined ambition which means to win!

After a delightfully informal introduction, Miss Ostriche and her interviewer snuggled up together in the only vacant chair in the Reliance Studio at the time, and Miss Ostriche, breaking the ice with her winsome personality and musical voice, said:

"Now, shall I tell you how I began?"

Having heard so much regarding this question from outsiders, the truth of the matter from her own lips was just what the interviewer was eager to know.

"Well, you see, I have never been on the stage at all. No, I didn't even take elocution lessons, but went right into the pictures. It was this way. I was only 15, going to High School. I went to see the moving pictures very often and liked them immensely. Then, one day I thought I would like to play in the pictures. Wasn't that nerve? But, just the same, I went down to the Biograph Studio and they thought I looked very much like Mary Pickford. (She was not with them then.) Any way they decided to give me a trial the next day.



FLORA FINCH AND JOHN BUNNY IN A VITAGRAPH PHOTOPLAY.



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Well, I went down, but Oh! how scared I was! There was a big crowd at the studio—it was a special picture, I think,—it seemed to me that five hundred eyes were looking on, though, of course, there were not that many—and I was shaking in the knees. But I must have gotten through all right because they told me to come down again the next day. Then, I was to go in their stock company but it was going out West and to other parts of the country and Mother wouldn't let me go. You see I was too young to go away all alone on so little experience. Well, then a friend of mine suggested that I go over to the Pathé and see them, so I did, never thinking it would bring anything, but the director of the Pathé decided to put me in a picture on trial and in that way I worked with that company too. Then the week following they were to let me know whether or not I was to join their regular stock company, but in the meantime the Eclair Company, who had seen me in the pictures, asked me if I would come up there and play in a picture with them. I thought I might as well make the \$5.00 a day with them while waiting for the Pathé, so I went over to their studio.

"Oh, I was frightened! The picture was to be a school girl comedy and about twelve girls were there that morning. The director stood us all up in a row and then told me what I was to play. I did not know the story then but I found later it was the lead. Just think of it! The Eclair liked my work so well in that picture that they asked me to come into their stock company right away and not wait for the Pathé, so I did.

"I stayed with the Eclair for a year and a half, and then the Reliance offered me the ingenue leads

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

in their stock company with an increase in salary, so now I'm here with them.

"No, it wasn't wonderful. Many others have done as well or better and also had no stage experience at all before they went into the pictures. Will I go on the legitimate stage? Well, I don't know. I like the pictures very much but some time I think I will go on the stage. I've had several good offers from managers who have seen my work in the pictures and I really think I should like the change some time, though not for a while. I like the pictures too well and there is a splendid opportunity in them."

Miss Ostriche added that she hopes to make a big success in the pictures and is working hard to this end, but judging from her salary of nearly three figures (and she is only 17) and her many thousands of admirers all over the country it would seem that she *has* made "a big success."

NOTE.—Just before this book went to press Miss Ostriche accepted an offer from the Thanhouser Company and is now with that firm.

At a subsequent meeting the interviewer also had a delightful chat with Mrs. Ostriche, who is justly proud of her talented young daughter. In the course of the conversation Mrs. Ostriche spoke interestingly of Miss Muriel's persistence and determination to climb to the top of the ladder. She said:

"It is almost impossible to get her out for a social evening. She is perfectly happy and contented if left alone in her room, standing before a large mir-

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

ror, and practicing facial expressions and various scenes and situations which include all the different emotions which bring versatility, and will make her just as clever in strong emotional scenes as in light comedy work."

### STATEMENT OF MISS ALICE JOYCE, KALEM STAR

One of the most famous actresses on the screen, and perhaps the most admired of all, is Miss Alice Joyce, the Kalem star. Miss Joyce, a tall, strikingly handsome young woman, with a wealth of light golden-brown hair, large, dark, expressive eyes, and a most exquisite mouth set in a face of exceptional beauty, is a most unusual personality. Outwardly she is cold, always calm and reserved. She is temperamental to a degree, enthusiastic but not strongly emotional—off the screen. On the surface she is apparently indifferent to her surroundings, work and success, but underneath beats a heart sympathetic and generous to a fault, alive to every opportunity, quick to grasp any new ideas, and always ready to encourage and praise the work of others. She is a most thorough student of photo-acting. All the tricks of the trade are at her command. Her knowledge of the technique of motion-picture acting is perhaps greater than that of any other player. And she, too, has never been on the legitimate stage. Recently, in speaking of the work, she said:

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

"There is a vast difference between acting in the pictures and on the stage. There are many little tricks and technical points one must acquire to 'put it over' on the screen. That is why so many really clever and famous actors and actresses make a failure in the pictures. They have grown dependent upon their voices, to the neglect of facial expressions, and have also acquired a 'staginess' which bars natural work, so essential on the screen. They are usually given to the use of various mannerisms which they cannot throw off, and these are evident and a part of their portrayals of every part. In the pictures, this is bad. No two parts should be played alike. The pictures are supposed to be life, and must, therefore, be natural.

"When I started in this business, about three years ago, I didn't know anything about acting. I had posed for photographers, illustrating fashion styles and so on, but I had never been on the stage, and so I had nothing to unlearn when going into the pictures."

"Isn't yours an exceptional case?" Miss Joyce was asked.

"No, not exceptional. There are many who began in the pictures and are stars now, without ever having been on the stage. My little friend, Irene Boyle, also with the Kalem, Marian Cooper, Alice Hollister, Anna Nilsson, and many others I might recall were never on the stage. Many leading photo-actors have had no real theatrical experience. A number of them were at one time in the chorus singing and dancing but were practically amateurs when they went into the pictures. There is a



MISS MAE HOTELY AS AN IRISHWOMAN  
(SHOWS WHAT CLEVER MAKE-UP CAN ACCOMPLISH)



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

greater future in the pictures, especially for one who photographs well, and the work is fascinating."

Miss Joyce, who is also one of the highest salaried players on the screen, drawing a weekly income of three figures, casually said that she, too, might some day go on the legitimate stage for a while, but just now she is quite content to continue in the pictures as star of one of the largest film companies in the United States.

### INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN BUNNY, STAR OF THE VITAGRAPH CO.

Perhaps the best known of all photoplayers is Mr. John Bunny, star of the Vitagraph. Mr. Bunny's name is a household word, not only from coast to coast in America, but also in every city and town in the world at all acquainted with the "movies," and the appearance of a "Bunny film" at any theater is really a treat. It is difficult to say whether Mr. Bunny is most delightful on the screen or off. He is a man of marked intelligence and a brilliant personality. He is especially interested in the motion pictures from an educational viewpoint. In a recent personal interview, when speaking of the industry which he says is his hobby, and not only his present but also his future life work, Mr. Bunny said in part:

"I believe the time is coming when motion picture machines will be a part of the equipment of

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

every school and college in the country, and many branches of learning now so objectionable to children will be made interesting by the use of motion pictures. My principal worry is the fact that I can't hope to live long enough to do all the work which I've mapped out for myself. I have planned fifty years of activity in the motion picture business, which I fear I will not live to carry out entirely. I want to see Latin and Greek mythology taught in every school and college in the United States by the use of films. It can and will be done and will be one of the biggest gifts to mankind the world has ever known."

Regarding the motion picture industry as a profession, Mr. Bunny said:

"There's nothing like it. No other work gives an actor or would-be actor the same advantages. In the pictures, a player gets 52 weeks in the year. Where is the theatrical manager who can offer that? Not even vaudeville stars can get such 'bookings.' At best, 30 weeks is about all an actor can expect on the stage. He may get summer stock work, but even so it is of uncertain duration. Stage work is a gamble. Even when you have been engaged for a production, rehearsed from three to six weeks, without pay, and no doubt bought your own costumes for the piece, you have no guarantee that it will be a success. If the public does not set its stamp of approval, your job is all over perhaps after but one performance, and you can only repeat the procedure by trying again with something else, charging the other to your loss account, with a credit notation probably on the page marked 'experience.'

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

"It is so much different in the pictures. There you get a weekly salary, no long tedious rehearsals, and an occasional off-day as the result of inclement weather, lack of parts for your type of player, or other reasons, and still draw your salary if on a contract basis.

"In many cases—as for instance your humble servant—there is an occasional open week when the film company will give a player permission to appear in vaudeville. I have made such appearances,—at Hammerstein's, and other theaters, and also in the larger cities of both East and West. I do a special typically moving-picturesque act which is a novelty, goes big, and I enjoy it, too. It brings a little 'loose change' as well as an intimate acquaintance with an audience, which you do not get when on the screen, of course. This shows you what an inducement it is to me."

Here Mr. Bunny modestly tendered a vaudeville contract, and the interviewer's eyes opened in wonder and admiration when she read the figure \$1,000 as the "loose change" for this popular screen star's appearance for a week in vaudeville.

In answer to the interviewer's question, Mr. Bunny continued:

"Yes, there are many in the business who had no professional experience whatever before going into the pictures. I know of at least six or more now at the Vitagraph who began their theatrical careers in the pictures and are now enjoying incomes of from two to five thousand a year—that is about \$40.00 to \$100.00 weekly. Among these are

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

Miss Flora Finch, Miss Leah Baird, Miss Dorothy Kelly, and others. The qualifications are essentially talent and the ability to be natural rather than to act."

At this point the interviewer, like the little girl who said that "every time she opened her mouth she put her foot in it," made a break by saying, "And what about personal appearance, Mr. Bunny?" Now, with all due justice, let it be said that no direct personal reference was intended or even thought of, but Mr. Bunny—quick to see the humorous side of any situation—held up his forefinger threateningly, and, with a contagious laugh, replied, "Now, young lady!" The offender was embarrassed, to say the least of it, but Mr. Bunny's genial nature and even disposition accepted it all as a joke, and after acknowledging effusive apologies, Mr. Bunny supplied the information desired by saying, "Of course, one must also photograph well."

When asked how he began his wonderful work on the screen, Mr. Bunny said:

"That's a long story. About three or four years ago, I was one of the foremost comedians on the stage. I have played good parts with the Shuberts, Chas. Frohman's productions and all the biggest managers. However, I awoke to the fact that the stage game was not what it had been and that the 'movies' were the coming thing. So I decided I would rather be behind the guns than in front of



JOHN BUNNY, OF THE VITAGRAPH CO., AS A JOLLY TAR



## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

them. I wanted to be with the 'shooters' rather than with the 'shot,' so I canceled my thirty weeks' contract with the Shuberts, threw aside all the years of experience and success I had had, and decided to begin all over again. I went down to the Vitagraph studio, which was then in its infancy, and frankly told them I wanted to work in the pictures. They knew of me and my work and were naturally surprised, in view of the general attitude toward moving picture players at that time, that I should be seeking an entrance into the field. However, I ignored this and offered to work in my first picture for nothing, so they could judge of my appearance on the screen. I was game and they accepted.

"Before I had finished my first picture they asked me to play in the next and I agreed, saying nothing till I had finished the first. Then I asked them what they could do for me in stock. I must admit that I did not receive a very enthusiastic reception. They said: 'Mr. Bunny, you are a high-salaried comedian. We have looked up your past engagements, and while we realize you would be a very valuable addition to the Vitagraph, yet since we have just started we could not afford to pay you anything approaching \$150.00.' So I knew by this that they had looked into my past and learned that my salary was \$150.00. This was all true, but I felt that the big future would be with the 'movies,' so I asked them what they would offer, and they said: 'There's no use for us to make you an offer, Mr. Bunny, you would only laugh at the ridiculously low sum.' I promised to be a real good boy and not even smile, so they continued: 'The best we could offer you now, Mr. Bunny, would be \$40.00 a week.' No, I didn't laugh. I could see

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

the big difference between what I had been getting and the \$40.00, but I could see a greater future on the side of the \$40.00 with the shooters. So I said, 'You're on, I'm game!'

"And that was my beginning with the Vitagraph, the only company for which I've ever worked or ever will. It is owned by the biggest-hearted men in the world, generous, thoughtful and always ready to help a fellow when he's down!"

"The pictures as an industry and a profession are really yet in their infancy. Not half their possibilities have been realized. They offer a field for the ambitious which is not simply for this day and generation but for the infinite future. They have to an extent taken the place of the drama and have wrought a strongly perceptible change in the status of the dramatic stage."

"Mr. Bunny, what do you think of the report that many of the best known actors and actresses on the stage are thinking of going into the pictures?"

Here Mr. Bunny shrugged his shoulders, rolled his remarkably expressive eyes, and in a most imitable manner illustrated his reply:

"Yes, a few years ago they turned up their haughty noses at people in the 'movies,' and now they are 'thinking' of going into the pictures. Some of them 'think' a long while when they seek the work, for it is very often found that the best of actors and actresses on the stage fail in the pictures. They do not understand how to 'put it over' by action, as they have grown dependent on the effect of the voice.

## MOVING PICTURE ACTING

"Just recently one of the stars of the dramatic stage gave a really splendid portrayal of his most famous rôle before the camera, but when the film was screened, though his expressions and actions were excellent, it was easy to see that he was not an experienced motion picture player. He had not been taught the many little tricks of the work which would have made the picture perfect. Therein lies the difference between acting in the pictures and on the stage.

"The talented amateur has as good a chance as the experienced professional and very often better. He is more apt to be natural, not 'stagy,' employing simplicity in his actions rather than wild meaningless gestures, and more quick and willing to learn than some of our so-called present-day stars.

"In the end, each must begin in just the same way as I did,—that is, 'jobbing' in one or two pictures at a daily remuneration, to give the company a chance to see how he or she appears on the screen, and then, if capable, the opportunity in the regular stock company is sure to come. Again I say, There's nothing like it."





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